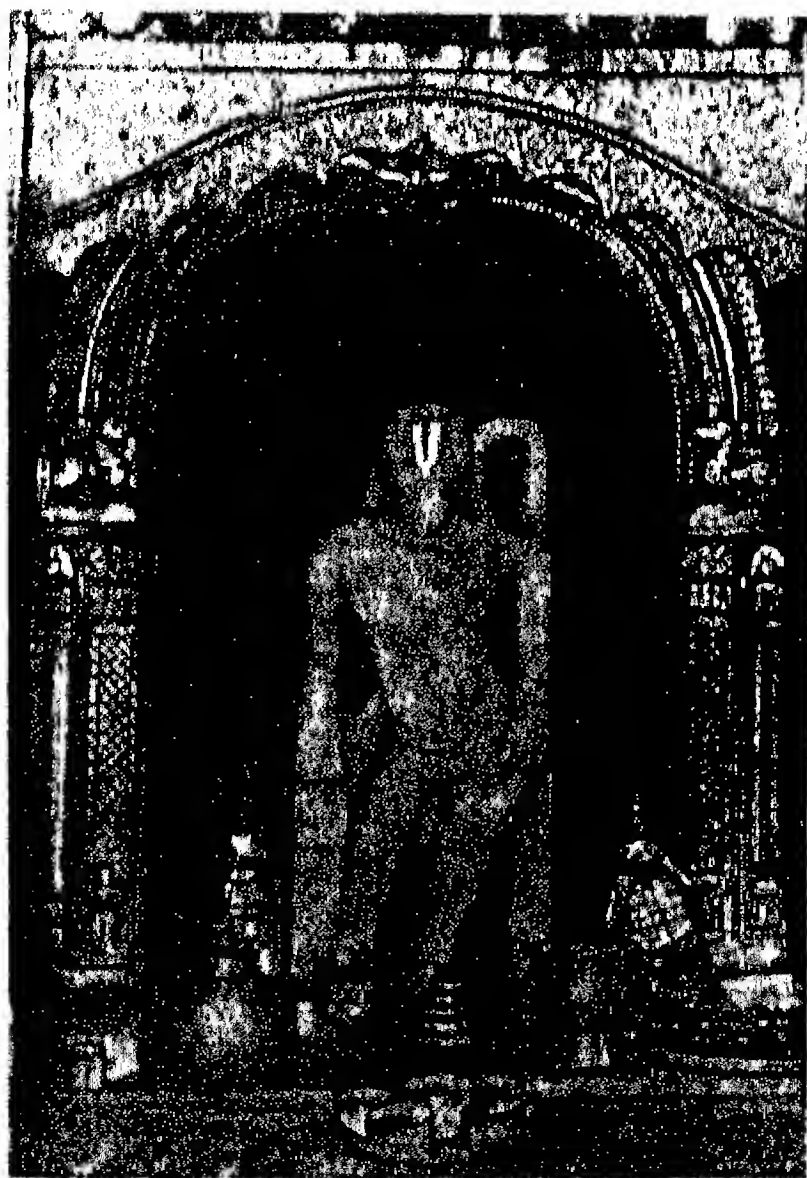


# THE SIMHACHALAM TEMPLE

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SIMHACHALAM DEVASTHANAM

SIMHACHALAM [A. P.]

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# Preface

The Simhachalam Temple has been hailed by scholars and the general public alike as one of the important Vaishnavite shrines of Andhra Pradesh. The present monograph is a historical study of the temple in all its aspects. Incidentally it is a study of the history and culture of the region of the Visakhapatnam District in which the temple is located.

The study of the temple, like other such studies, has to be based on a variety of source material. The most handy source material is the epigraphical wealth. Besides a detailed examination of the inscriptions of the temple, a study of the inscriptions from other regions and other temples having a bearing on this temple and the region, is necessary. To cite an example, the political and cultural history presented in the inscriptions of the Srikurmam Temple (Srikakulam District) runs parallel to that of the Simhachalam Temple and complements the latter in certain matters.

The temple itself supplies material for the study of its architecture and sculpture. However, its architecture and sculpture owe their inspiration to the contemporary monuments in the regions to the north, the south and the west of Simhachalam. The study of the architecture and sculpture of the temple thus involves a study of the main temple complexes of South India. Again, a proper appreciation of the art and architecture of ancient and medieval India requires a study of Hindu Silpa Texts on art, architecture and iconography. In composition of the present monograph, texts like the *Bhuvanapradipa*, *Tantra Samuchchaya* and *Manasara* were found to be of immense help to understand the architecture of the temple. Many texts, secular and religious, having a bearing on the prescribed iconographic norms (*pratima lakshna*) had to be consulted to present the sculptural wealth of the temple in its proper perspective.

Indigenous literature and the accounts of foreign travellers are of much help in understanding the history and culture of any locality. The Telugu literature since the 14th century gives occasional glimpses of the temple and its history. For

instance, a literary work – the *Simhadrinarasimha Satakam* gives an account of a raid which the temple suffered. There is considerable speculation about the date of this occurrence. A historical perspective of the times in which the poet lived helps us to fix the date of the event.

Besides literature, tradition, accumulated over centuries and passed on from generation to generation, is of great help in reconstructing the local history. But sometimes tradition may give a false lead. Stories which deal with the antiquity of the temple and the nature of the principal icon (*mulavirat*) are coloured by sectarian interests and have to be therefore treated with caution.

The study of the temple would not have taken this form but for the fortunate discovery of manuscript records pertaining to the temple at the Collector's Office, Visakhapatnam and the Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras. The documents preserved at the Collector's Office throw an abundant light on the life of the temple in the modern period. Among the manuscripts of the Oriental Manuscript Library, four documents offer valuable help for the study of the temple. The first is the document relating to the history of the Pusapati family of Vizianagaram and the second is the *Simhachalam Kaifiyat* which gives a short description of the temple as it appeared to the 19th century observer. The third and the fourth are the two Sanskrit manuscripts – the *Narasimha Mala Mantra* and the *Nrisimha Stavaraja* – which throw light on the iconography of the images of Narasimha found in the temple.

The plan of the monograph is to sketch each aspect of the temple in a logical fashion. The first chapter seeks to explain why the place has become the natural choice for building a temple and why it enjoys the popular esteem. The historical background of the region round about Simhachalam is traced in the next chapter. I am fully aware of the controversies over issues concerning the political history of the region. They would have merited a detailed examination if the thesis were a dynastic study. This being mainly a study of the history of the temple, the consensus regarding the general sequence of events is here normally accepted. The third chapter is only descriptive, giving a sketch of the entire *kshetra*.

The mythological stories, legends and the literary references to the temple are of great interest to the numerous pilgrims that visit the temple. These are critically analysed in Chapter IV. The origin and development of the temple is discussed at great length in Chapter V. The popular notion that the temple is as old as the creation itself, is not as surprising as the belief of some educated people that the temple was constructed only by the munificence of Krishnaraya of Vijayanagara. The very prominent situation of the inscriptions of Krishnaraya, their glaring display by the administration and the references to the visit of Krishnaraya to Simhadri in Telugu Literature have led to the peculiar impression about the origin of the temple. An attempt is here made to steer clear of all these misunderstandings regarding the antiquity of the temple and the peculiar nature of the principal icon.

Under the title 'Functionaries and Management', the role played by the functionaries, is analysed in Chapter VI bringing out the historical evolution of each cadre. An attempt is also made to trace the history of Management from the earliest day to the present. Chapter VII gives an account of the worship that is now being conducted in the temple. The study would have been more interesting if taken up in a historical perspective, tracing the modes of *archana* pertaining in earlier times. This however, is not possible because of the lack of sufficient evidence on the conduct of the ritual and its evolution. The inscriptions, our sole guide in this matter, have very stray references to the mode of *archana* and in all these references, no difference from the existing practice can be noticed.

To discuss the life of the temple in relation to society is as difficult as it is necessary. In the inscriptions hailing from Andhra, there are very few which depict the social organisation of the village as a whole. Though ample evidence is available to show the community life of artisans, oil-mongers, merchants and others, no such evidence is forthcoming to appreciate the local self-government of medieval Andhra. Hence for understanding of the temple and society (Chapter VIII), attention has to be mainly concentrated on the cultural life around the temple rather than on the political life.

The architecture of the temple is described in Chapter IX. A few general remarks about this matter are not out of place.

The study of Hindu Temple was started by European scholars. Fergusson, Havell and others. They described the Hindu Temples purely from the point of aesthetic beauty, strength and utility. But during the course of the present century, after the publication of critical editions of Hindu texts on architecture like the *Manasara*, a new dimension to the study of Hindu architecture, has been opened. The Hindu texts treat the temple as an organic whole, a body in which the soul of divinity resides. Like the human body the temple has different *angas* (limbs), corresponding to stages from foot to head. Approach to the Hindu architecture from this new stand-point has been progressing. The most notable work of the recent times is the well-known study of Indian Architecture by Percy Brown. Recently, there has been an increasing wealth of writing by Indian scholars. The articles on Pallava architecture and the Temples of Khajuraho (Ancient India, Vol. XIV and XV) by K. R. Srinivasan and R. Krishnadeva respectively are the latest. I have followed the method adopted by these writers and made an attempt to describe graphically the architectural features of the temple with the help of the terminology of the native texts and also to trace the influences that moulded the construction.

In the description of the sculpture (Chapter X), an attempt is made to underline the significant influences and to place each type of motifs in the proper historical evolution. In the sculptures of the temple, the figures of Narasimha pose interesting and difficult problem. I have taken it up and discussed at great length in this chapter. All the available texts giving the *pratima lakshana* of the Narasimha image are consulted and an attempt is made to ransack unpublished material for making a plausible explanation of these figures.

One of the main interests of the temple is its epigraphical wealth. The characteristic features of the inscriptions of the temple are detailed in the last Chapter (Chapter XI) and in a separate appendix, the inscriptions are analysed and categorised pointing out their importance when necessary. The concluding portion of the monograph contains a small chapter 'Conclusion', appendices, glossary, bibliography and index.

Waltair,  
19th March 1969

K.S.

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# Abbreviations

A.R.E.	:	Annual Reports of South Indian Epigraphy (Numbers such as 391 of 1933 refer to the particular inscription of the work)
A.R.A.S.C.	:	Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle
Brigg's Ferishta	:	History of Rise of Mahomedan power in India by Ferishta translated from Persian by John Briggs
E. Ind.	:	Epigraphica Indica
Fig.	:	Figure
Ind. Arch.	:	Percy Brown's 'Indian Architecture'
I. Ant.	:	Indian Antiquary
J.A.H.R.S.	:	Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society
J.B.B.R.A.S.	:	Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society
J.I.H.	:	Journal of Indian History
J.O.R.	:	Journal of Oriental Research
No. or Nos.	:	Numbers in South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. VI
O.H.R.J.	:	Orissa Historical Research Journal
S.	:	Saka
S.I.I.	:	South Indian Inscriptions

# The Simhachalam Temple

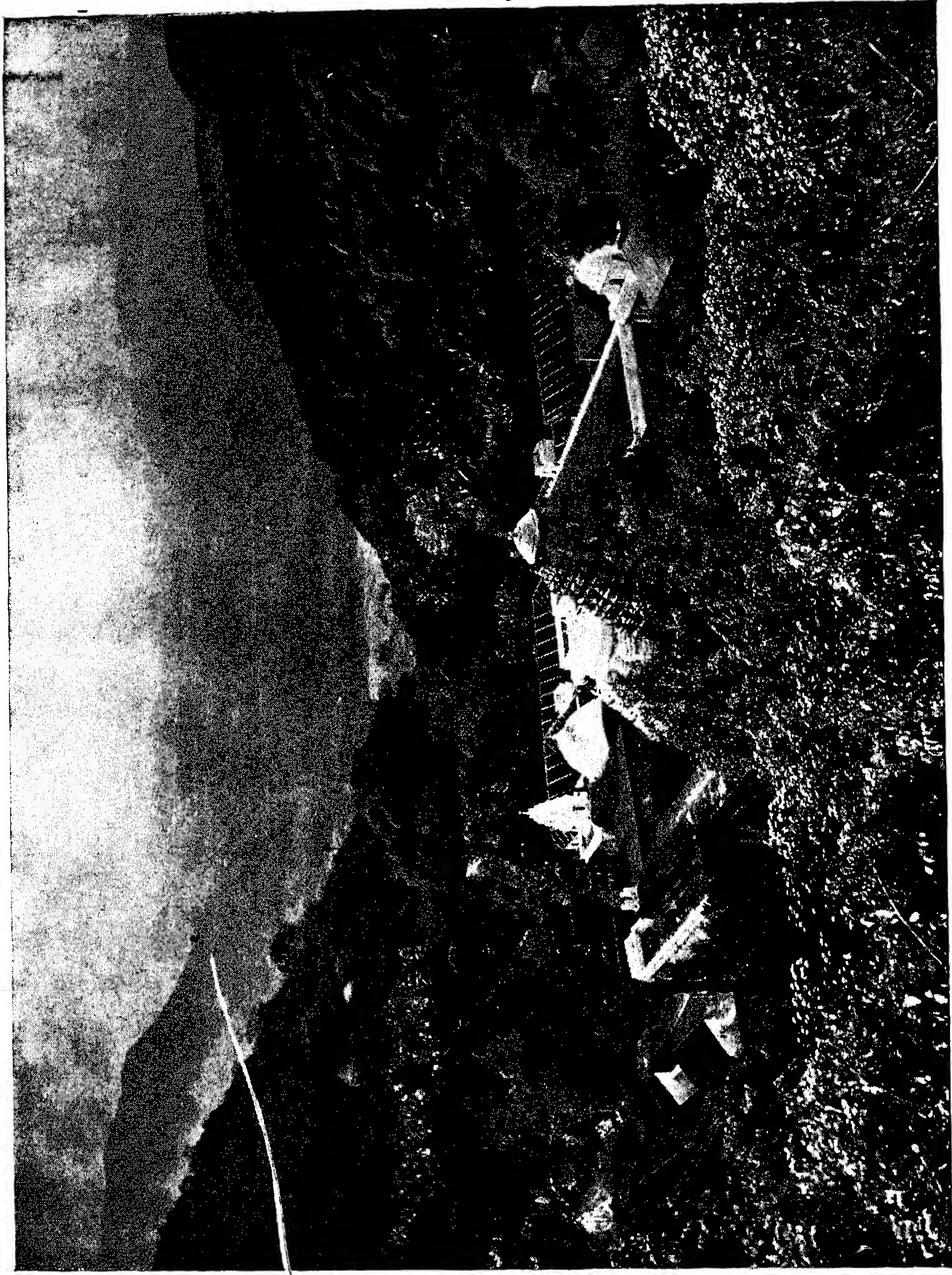


Fig. 4 : The Temple (The Bird's Eye View)

## Simhachalam, the Place

The Simhachalam Temple is picturesquely situated on a hill 800 feet above the sea level, in a tiny hill range of the Eastern Ghats, at a distance of 10 miles to the north of Visakhapatnam, the principal port of the Andhra Pradesh. Adivivaram (17.46' N and 83.15' E), the nearest village at the foot of the hill, lies at a distance of two and half miles from Simhachalam Railway Station on the South Eastern Railway.

The hill range on which the temple is located is known as the Kailasa (17.47' N and 83.21½' E). The range runs from east to west from Lawson's Bay on the coast near Visakhapatnam to Simhachalam forming a natural boundary to Visakhapatnam. The hills are relicts, that is, residues of what must have been a mountain system of considerable magnitude. In their present state, they are only of modest height when compared to the main ranges of Eastern ghats, ranging from 600 feet to 1,663 feet above mean sea level with a rising gradient towards the west.

The geographical setting of the region around Simhachalam can best be understood in the context of the geography of the Visakhapatnam region and the Andhra State. The most conspicuous topographical feature of Andhra is its river system which makes it a veritable rice granary of South India. The Krishna and the Godavari are its two major rivers and the Penna, the Tungabhadra, the Langulaya and the Vamsadhara are its minor rivers. The region of Visakhapatnam District singularly enough is not covered either by its major or minor rivers. The rivers of the district—the Gosthani (20 miles north of Simhachalam), the Sarada (20 miles west of Simhachalam), and the Varaha (40 miles south of Simhachalam)—are only of modest size. Half of the district even now consists of a forest and hilly tract. Generally speaking, the region holds lesser attraction to human settlement than the deltaic

regions.<sup>1</sup> Against this background, the immediate vicinity of the Simhachalam hill range offers a happy contrast.

The most noteworthy feature of the hill range is that it abounds in perennial rivulets, springs and seepages. One of the important rivulets is the Hanumantavaka Gedda which runs through a valley on the Eastern hills and discharges the waters into the sea near the Lawson's Bay. Among the springs, the Simhachalam Dhara, Sitamma Dhara and Madhava Dhara are well-known. The Simhachalam Dhara is the biggest of all and is the most popular one. Many other less known springs and seepages, drain the slopes of the mountains and thus help in fertilising the fields on the slopes. To the east of the range, there is a lake, called Mudasaralova Cheruvu which is fed by the springs originating in the Kailasa and Kambalakonda ranges. This lake forms one of the sources of water supply to Visakhapatnam Town.

The climate of the hills, influenced as it is by their elevation and nearness to the sea, is cool, steady and enjoyable.<sup>2</sup> The mean temperature is not known to rise beyond 92° F nor fall below 68° F. It gradually increases from 80 in January to 92 in May and June and falls in July with the setting of the Southwest Monsoon. The diurnal range of temperature is narrow and fluctuates between 8 to 10. The main difference in the climate of the port town Visakhapatnam on the plains and of Simhachalam on the hill is that the summer is still less pronounced and the winter is a little more severe at Simhachalam.

The rainfall of Visakhapatnam district when compared with the Godavari-Krishna region is less. However, the mean annual rainfall on the hills is about 40 inches. It is mainly seasonal, and is received during the period of the Southwest Monsoon from June to October. Before the onset of the monsoon, rains are caused due to heat-thunderstorms during afternoons in the months of April and May. The maximum rainfall occurs in the month of October during the retreating monsoon period, and the mean monthly average is about 7". October is the month of

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<sup>1</sup> Only in the modern era, efforts are made to tap all the natural resources so as to make the district prosperous.

<sup>2</sup> The climatological account is based on the data collected from the Meteorological observatory at the Andhra University Campus, Waltair and the Aerodrome near the Simhachalam Railway Station.



storms in the Bay of Bengal, and these strike the coast causing heavy rainfall. The Bay Monsoon continues to give rain throughout the month of October. The dry season sets in the month of November and lasts till early April.

The area of the Kailasa hill range is a typical khondalite country. The readily obtainable rock is khondalite. But, within a radius of 10 miles of Simhachalam, granite and charnockite are available in plenty. On the hill range near Pendurti, which lies five miles west of the Simhachalam range, quarrying of these rocks is done on a large scale even today. The main temple was built with granite rock obtained from the Pendurti area. The nicely carved pillars in the assembly hall (*Asthana Mandapa*) and the marriage hall (*Kalyana Mandapa*) of the Simhachalam temple are made up of fine-grained dark-coloured charnockites. Khondalite is used for the enclosure walls and for other recent constructions on the precincts of the temple.

The soil of the Visakhapatnam District in most of the areas is red and ferruginous and contrasts with the fertile black soil of the deltaic region. The soil on the hill range is derived essentially from the weathering of khondalites. The light red soil derived from khondalite can be seen all over the hill particularly on the flanks. The associated rocks, where present, bring forth black soil. The soil particularly on the western hills supports maximum vegetation.

The hill range on account of its climate, rainfall, and soil has abundant growth of flora. Flowers like the jasmin, the rose, the artabotrys, and the chrysanthemum are to be found on the Simhachalam hill. The hill, cut into terraces, is now made use of for developing large plantations of the pineapple, the jack fruit and the banana. The hills are dotted with fruit-bearing trees. The mango, the lime, the custard apple, the pomegranate and the tamarind—all these are grown in plenty on the hill. The hill range also abounds in medicinal herbs, some of which are used by the natives for curing diseases, peculiar to the locality of both human beings and cattle. The fauna on the hills is very much less, compared with their flora. Domesticated animals – the cows, the dogs and the pigs – are to be found on the

Simhachalam hill and their stay is rendered harmless by the absence of any big wild life except for a cheeta or a panther that may occasionally stray into the night from the neighbouring forest.

The rough and irregular topography of the hill range standing in marked contrast to the low-lying plains presents a restful natural scenery. The scenery of the hills marked by green tufts of grass, with bushes and coppices in the sheltered ravines, is exquisite. Particularly the western hills, with their ever-oozing springs are clothed in thick verdure and offer a most natural point of attraction in the entire area.

### *The Simhachalam Temple*

The hill on which the temple stands is locally known as the Simhachalam, and its height is about 1,500 feet above sea level. A natural valley runs along the north-western slope of the hill covering almost half of the height of the hill. This wooded hollow with springs in its proximity was found to be admirably suitable for locating a shrine at the top of the glen.<sup>3</sup> In course of time, a small village grew round the temple and steps were built along the course of water sloping down the glen to serve as an approach both to the village and the shrine.

### *Etymology of Simhachalam and Significance*

The word 'Simhachalam' etymologically means 'the hill of the lion'. It is the hill of the Great Man-Lion, Nara-Simha, the fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.<sup>4</sup> The hills and dens are generally conceived to be the abodes of lions, and we find temples dedicated to Lord Narasimha generally on hill tops. The idea of a deity on a hill signifies again the position of the Dweller in Transcendental Abode (Paramdhaman) assigned to divinity in Hindu religion. Thus, besides the temple Simhachalam, shrines dedicated to Narasimha are to be seen on the hill tops at Yadavadri (Yadugiri, Mysore State) and at

<sup>3</sup> The selection of the site is strictly in accordance with the *agama* scriptures. The *agama* texts prescribe that the site of the temple should be pleasing to the mind (*manorama*). That site which is close to the wood, mountain and stream (*vana*, *saila* and *tatani*) is an ideal one according to the texts.

<sup>4</sup> Some natives of the village hold that the shape of the hill which is like a couchant lion gave the name Simhachalam to the hill.



Vedadri (near Korukonda, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh).

### *Name of the Deity*

The presiding Deity of the temple is Varaha Narasimha. This image is one of the many forms of Narasimha, seen all over the country. While at Yadavadri, the form is that of meditating Narasimha, the one at Vedadri, is accompanied by Lakshmi, his consort. At Simhachalam, the image of Narasimha, is a combination of Man-Lion (Nara-Simha) and Boar (Varaha). The deity is popularly described as Simhadri Appanna.<sup>5</sup>

APPROACHES TO THE SHRINE: The temple can be reached by different routes. The most popular is the way by the flight of steps, about 1000 in all, from the foot of the hill in Adivivaram village. A pathway from Madhava Dhara on the other side of the hill runs over the top of the hill to the temple.<sup>6</sup> Besides these a motorable road has been laid in recent times to facilitate tourist traffic. The administration of the temple maintains buses and vans to take pilgrims along the *ghat* road of three miles.

The path along the flight of steps has certain unique features worth describing. The ascent to the temple starts from the gateway called Bhairava Dvara at the foot of the hill in the Adivivaram village. The pilgrim treks along the steps enjoying the shade of trees and the natural scenery of sylvan surroundings, making obeisance to the gods enshrined in the little niches of the parapet walls. Half-way up the valley when the ascent becomes steep and the glen narrow, the pilgrim reaches another gateway, called the Hanuman gate, with a spring on its side called, Hanumanta Dhara.<sup>7</sup> The ascent continues along this

<sup>5</sup> Simhadri Appanna: This name of the Lord has been variously interpreted. Some trace it to *Appa* (meaning father). Others equate *appamu* to '*kappamu*' (tribute) and argue that Appanna is one who takes tribute. Another ingenious interpretation is that the name is derived from Aparna (*Sakti*). The first explanation appears to be the correct one. A few inscriptions (Nos. 972, 805, 1088, 699) mention the principal icon as 'Apparu' and 'Appa'.

<sup>6</sup> Madhava Dhara lies at a distance of five miles north of Visakhapatnam on the bus route to Simhachalam. There is a small temple of Vishnu on the precincts of the spring.

<sup>7</sup> The gateway shows on either side the presence of a rampart. Local tradition gives them a long antiquity and avers that there used to be many more of them in ancient times and that they were destroyed by the predatory raids of Muslims. In this context, the tradition gives a

narrow part of the glen till the pilgrim reaches another gateway, by the side of which is an artificial waterfall called Akasadhara. The path then leads to a wide terrace which has another natural spring described as Vedavati. A few steps ahead is the meeting point of two routes—the bus route and the flight of steps. Going up a few more steps, the pilgrim arrives at the village on the hill, marked by boundary signs, known to the people of the village as the two auspicious points (*Jodu Bhadralu*). Passing through this gate the pilgrim reaches the amphitheatre in which stands the temple proper.

THE VILLAGE: A population of about five hundred inhabit the village which has grown round the temple proper. Out of the hundred houses of the village, only twenty are tiled, and the rest thatched. Half of the population consists of the Hill Chiefs (*Konda Doras*). These are not chiefs proper but are merely so styled. In fact, *Konda Doras* are a hill tribe whose members have adapted themselves to the mode of living of civilized people. The remaining population consists of the *Kapus*, *Gollas*, *Vaisyas* and *Brahmins*.<sup>8</sup> All these people look to the temple for their living. Some of them live by looking after the needs of pilgrims and others by securing leases of plantations, gardens and lands on the hills. Malaria used to be a great scourge to the people; but its severity is greatly mitigated by the anti-malarial operations undertaken by the administration of the temple. In this village on the hill, the administration maintains five officers' quarters, two big choultries and a number of pilgrim sheds for the use of pilgrims. The conservancy staff under a sanitary inspector looks after the sanitary arrangements of the village. The village has a head of its own called Village Munsiff, who is entitled to temple honours on special festivals for the Lord.

Adivivaram, the village down the hill, which is closely attached to the temple, has a population of about 5,000.<sup>9</sup> It is a

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wrong lead. The mode of construction conforms to the pattern of buildings of modern times.

\* None of the ancient families can now be found. The ancestry of the present population goes back to two or three centuries.

• The name Adivivaram is modern. In the Government records of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the village is described as Adivaramu. The word is derived from Tamil and means a place situated on the flank of the foot of the hill (*adi*). See, *infra* Chapter VIII.

*panchayat* village with a Rural Health Centre and Hospital maintained by the temple. The office of the Executive Officer of the Simhachalam Temple, the quarters of a number of priests and other staff of the temple, the school for training the priests (Agama Pathasala) and the pilgrim sheds and choultries maintained by the administration, are all located in this village. Most of the people are either employed as the staff of the temple or cultivate lands of the temple. The two gardens of the Lord, the Phool Bagh and the Udyanavanam, the two temple tanks, the Lord's Tank (Swami Pushkarini) and the Boar's Tank (Varaha Pushkarini) are also in this village. The Deity descends to the village for the celebration of special festivals like the Floating Festival (Teppotsavamu), the Tree Festival (Sami Puja), the Swinging Festival (Dolotsavamu) and the Hunting Festival (Makaraveta).

### *Simhachalam and its contacts with other places*

Simhachalam has been fortunate enough not to suffer the fate of places like Srikurmam (Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh) and Mukhalingam (Srikakulam District) which, once centres of great activity, have now gone into relative obscurity. Firstly, the natural attraction of the site on which the temple is located endowed it with a capacity for recuperation and renewal. Secondly, Visakhapatnam which is situated at a distance of 10 miles from Simhachalam became a prosperous commercial and industrial city and expanded towards Simhachalam. Many offices of the State and Central Government are located on the route to Simhachalam. The villages lying on this route have prospered by catering to the needs of the growing town, Visakhapatnam. The entire area from Visakhapatnam to Simhachalam gradually became well-knit with communications. Thus the phenomenal development of Visakhapatnam resulted in the growth of Simhachalam. Finally, the *Zamindars* of Vizianagaram have been greatly responsible for the continued prosperity of the temple in modern times. They endowed the temple with lands and are responsible for channelling the water of the mountain for flowers and fruits and popularising the temple by their patronage. The temple now owns 400 acres of land in the villages situated nearby, and thus plays a significant role in the economic life of the

region. It is now one of the principal suppliers of flowers and fruits to the markets of Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Chittivalasa and Kottavalasa. Simhachalam is thus very much alive and grows in strength as years pass by.

Pre-eminent as one of the important Vaishnava shrines of Andhra Pradesh, the Simhachalam Temple is easily the most popular shrine among the temples of Visakhapatnam District. Travelling through Visakhapatnam District, one often comes across the names like Simhadri, Appanna, Simhalu, Simhachalam and so on, among the people of the villages and towns obviously so named in honour of the Lord Simhadri Appanna, capable of giving progeny to women. To understand the influence exerted by Simhadrinatha over the common folk of the district, one has to visit the temple in the early hours on Saturdays and on festive occasions. The villagers betake themselves there by the night-fall of the previous day, form into circles of families and spend the entire night singing devotional songs (*Bhajan*) in praise of the Lord, before they pay obiesance to the Deity.



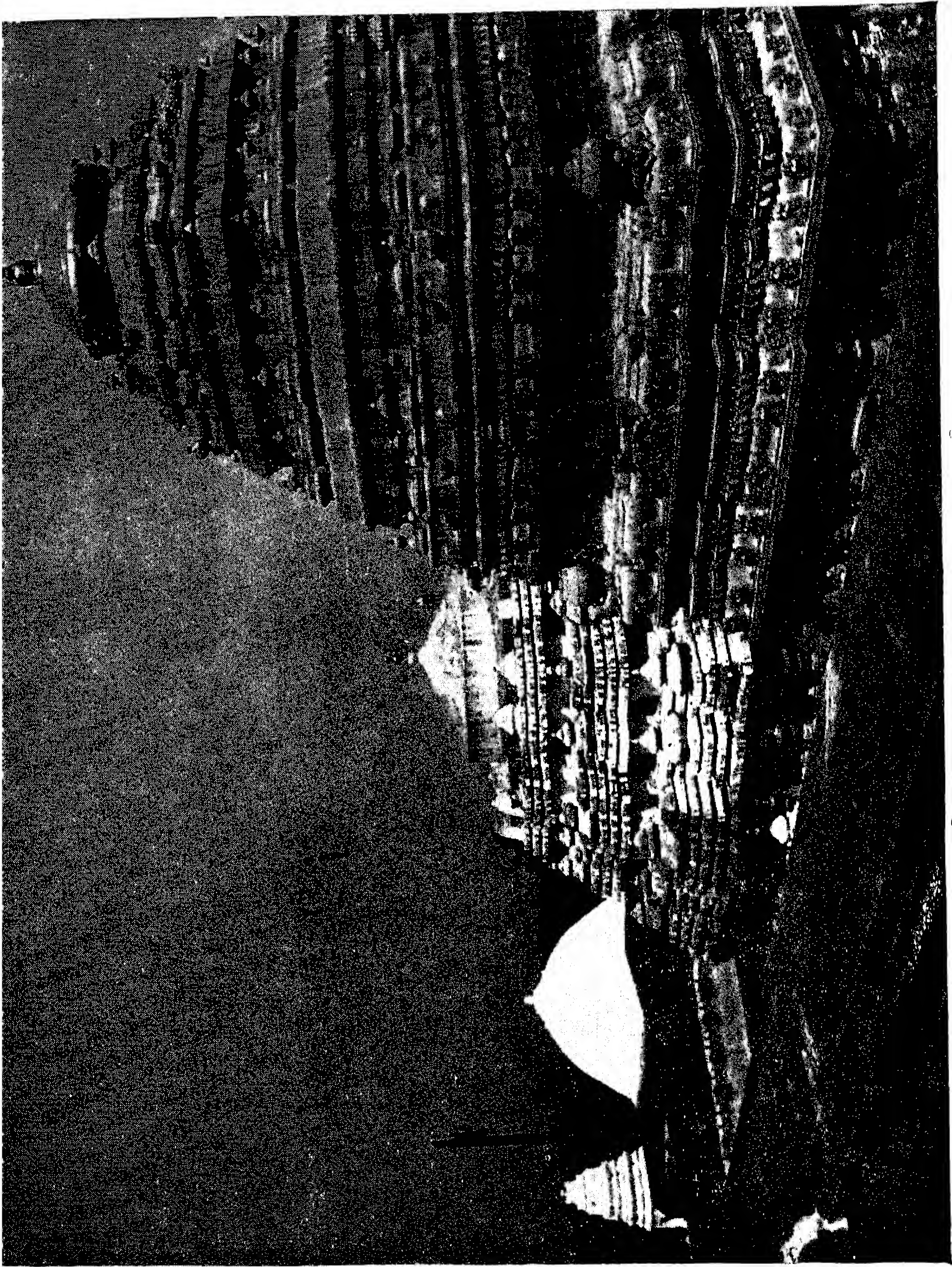


Fig. 5 : The Temple towers

# The Historical Background

The physiography of the region, its essential backwardness, when compared with the deltaic regions to its north and the south affected the course of its history. No prehistoric remains of importance have ever come to light from Visakhapatnam District. The limestone caves of the hills at Anantagiri (Borra Caves, as they are popularly called) are reported to have yielded paleolithic stone implements.<sup>1</sup> But scientific examination of these and other areas has yet to confirm this report. It is, however, certain that the ancient burials (megaliths) which have been discovered by archaeologists in other districts of Andhra have not so far been found in the Visakhapatnam District. While the fertile Godavari-Krishna *doab* abounds with monuments and archaeological sites dating back to the centuries before the Christian Era, the Visakhapatnam District presents no archaeological sites like Dharanikota or Nagarjunakonda. The Buddhist *sangharamas* of the district, Sankaram and Ramatirtham, are isolated spots. They "are remarkable more for their antiquarian interest than for their artistic or architectural values".<sup>2</sup> Though the district has a coast-line equal to that of Krishna District, there is no ancient maritime trading centre like Koddura (Gudur) and Kantakasila (Ghantasala). Thus it is quite natural that no record earlier than 11th century refers to Simhachalam or to any place in the immediate vicinity.

## *Simhachalam as a part of Kalinga*

Simhachalam and its environs grew into importance only in the medieval times. However, earlier references starting from the 4th century A. D. mention broad political divisions of ancient times pertaining to these tracts of land. 'Devarashtra' mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra

<sup>1</sup> Anantagiri lies at a distance of 55 miles north-west of Visakhapatnam.

<sup>2</sup> See, Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 36.



Gupta (A. D. 335-80), has been identified with the present Visakhapatnam District.<sup>3</sup> A copper-plate grant of the Eastern Chalukyan dynasty of the 8th century, however, mentions Bhogapuram, which lies 30 miles north of Simhachalam, as a place situated in the Madhyama Kalinga.<sup>4</sup> From this record, it is evident that Simhachalam and its environs formed part of Madhyama Kalinga and the region above it the Uttara Kalinga and below it, the Dakshina Kalinga. Its history is thus connected with the hoary past of Kalinga, and it is necessary to have a broad perspective of the history of Kalinga from the earliest times to understand the later history of the region around Simhachalam.

**KALINGA, ITS BOUNDARIES:** To trace the early history of Kalinga, it is necessary to know the geographical limits of the area. A survey of the literary and epigraphic evidence from the times of the *Mahabharata* to that of the medieval times shows that the boundaries of Kalinga changed from time to time. Thus in the *Mahabharata* we get a picture of Kalinga which stretched from the river Vaitarani in the Cuttack District to the river Godavari.<sup>5</sup> The Asokan edicts of the 3rd century B. C. fix the northern boundary at the region mentioned in the *Mahabharata*.<sup>6</sup> But during the early centuries of Christian era, it decreased in size. For, the Sanskrit texts of the period like *Bharata's Natyasastra* clearly distinguished Kalinga from Tosala in the upper valley of the river Mahanadi and Andhra, the region between the rivers Godavari and Krishna.<sup>7</sup> By about the 7th century, the southern boundary also shrank. The Aihole pillar inscription of Pulakesin of A.D. 642 catalogues Pishtapura and Kalinga separately,<sup>8</sup> and thus

<sup>3</sup> Kasimkota plates of Chalukya Bhima (A.R.E. 1908-9, ii para 59) mentions the grant of village in *Elamanchi Kalingadesa* which was a part of the province called Devarashtra. J. Dubreuil was the first person to identify Elamanchi with modern Yellamanchili in the Visakhapatnam District. (See J. Dubreuil, *Ancient History of Deccan*). This identification is confirmed by the discovery of a coin of Samudra Gupta at Sankaram (See A. R. E. 1909, p. 4).

<sup>4</sup> Manjeru copper-plate grant (A.R.E. 1908-9, C.P. grant No. 10).

<sup>5</sup> *Mahabharata, Vanaparvam*, iii, 114.

<sup>6</sup> B.C. Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 64.

<sup>7</sup> See, '*The Natya Sastra of Bharata*' (Haridas Sanskrit Grandhamala), Chapter 14, verse 38.

<sup>8</sup> The Aihole Pillar Inscription - E. Ind. Vol. VI, 1 ff.

the southern boundary extended to the limits of Visakhapatnam District.

Hieun Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, who visited the country in the middle of the 7th century, distinguished Kalinga from Wutu (Odra) and Kunguto (Kongada). From his account it is quite evident that by the 7th century the ancient Kalinga came to be divided into three parts—the upper region around the Mahanadi river (Odra), the central region down the river Mahanadi (Kongada) and the lower region (Kalinga).<sup>9</sup> Finally a 11th century Tamil inscription fixes the northern boundary to the Mahendragiri mountain range.<sup>10</sup> Thus in course of time the limits of Kalinga decreased; but nevertheless they never shrank farther than Mahendragiri in the north and Simhachalam area in the south. Even the village *Kaifiyats* compiled by Mackenzie in the 19th century place the Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Ganjam Districts in the Kalingarajya.<sup>11</sup> Only in the modern times the upper portion of the ancient Kalinga formed part of the Orissa State and the southern portion, that of Andhra Pradesh.

### *Kalinga in Literature and Tradition*

The *Mahabharata* remains the earliest text to refer to Kalinga. The Kalinga of the epic period was ruled by one Chitrangada, with his capital at Rajapuri; and this king joined the Pandavas in the Bharata War. The *Vanaparva* (sections 114 and 118) refers to the march of Pandavas through the land of Kalinga. The Kalinga figures notably in the Buddhist tradition. After the *parinirvana* of the Buddha, we are told in a Pali Jataka, a Buddhist monk visited Kalinga and gave a tooth relic of the Buddha to Brahmadata, the king of Kalinga. The latter raised a *stupa* over it for its worship and the place became famous as Dantapura and the king made it his capital.<sup>12</sup> From these accounts, we can know that the spread of the Aryan culture and Buddhism occurred in this region at a very early date.

### *Asoka and Kalinga*

But authentic history of this land commences in the 3rd

<sup>9</sup> Watter, *Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, p. 198.

<sup>10</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XX, p. 232.

<sup>11</sup> See, Local Records, Vol. IV.

<sup>12</sup> *Dhatuvamsa*, Ch. III and IV.



century B. C. when it was conquered by Asoka, the great Mauryan king in 261 B.C.<sup>13</sup> This Kalinga campaign turned out to be an epoch-making event in the career of Asoka. The mighty soldier realising the horrors of war turned out to be a missionary of peace. His two rock edicts at Dhauli (near Bhubaneswar) and Jaugada (in the Ganjam District, Orissa State) enjoin the officers to practise the duties associated with the dharma<sup>14</sup> in the conquered territory.

### *Kharavela*

We do not know whether the Kalinga empire continued to be under the Mauryas after Asoka. The next landmark in the history of Kalinga is the period of her great glory under Kharavela of the Chedi dynasty. Kharavela ruled Kalinga in the second century B. C. The well-known Hathigumpha inscription which records the military exploits of this great king describes him as the Ruler of Kalinga (Kalingadhipati).<sup>15</sup> Within a period of a decade he expanded his territory striking terror to the hearts of the contemporary rulers and became the founder of an empire which stretched from the river Vaitarani in the north to the river Godavari in the south.

**KALINGA AFTER KHARAVELA :** The history of Kalinga after the death of Kharavela is rather obscure. There is reason to believe that the region of Kalinga came under the influence of Andhra Satavahanas who dominated the political life of the Deccan from the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. The *Yugapurana* states that the Satavahana kings ruled over Kalinga after the fall of Chedi dynasty.<sup>16</sup> An inscription from the caves of Nasik mentions Gautamiputra Satakarni (A.D. 63-87) as the Lord of Mahendra Mountain (Mahendra Giri in the Ganjam District, Orissa State).<sup>17</sup> The excavation at Salihundam (Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh), a Buddhist site of ancient Kalinga, has brought into light a few coins attributable to Satavahana kings.<sup>18</sup> All this

<sup>13</sup> H. C. Rayachaudari, *Political History of Ancient India*.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XX, 66 ff.

<sup>16</sup> J.B.O.R.S. Vol. XVI, pp. 18-60.

<sup>17</sup> E. Ind. Vol. VIII, Nasik Ins. No. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Arch. Survey of India, *Annual Report* 1907-8 & 1919-20. The record

evidence points to a period of Andhra-Satavahana supremacy in the region in the early centuries of the Christian era.

### *Cultural History of the Region*

The cultural history of the Visakhapatnam District starts from the date of the foundation of the Buddhist sanctuaries at Ramatirtham (30 miles south of Simhachalam) and at Sankaram (corruption of *Sangharama* also known as Bojjannakonda, 40 miles north of Simhachalam). We do not know when exactly Buddhism was introduced in Visakhapatnam District. It could be either during the days of Asoka or later during the reign of Kharavela of the Chedi dynasty. Be that as it may, the votive *stupas* and the sculptures of Sankaram present both the Hinayana as well as the Mahayana phase of Buddhism. This *Sangharama* as well as the one at Ramatirtham were in a flourishing state during the early centuries of the Christian Era when the tract was under the sway of the Satavahanas, and continued their existence till the early medieval age.

### *The Kalinga at the Time of Samudra Gupta's Conquest*

The military campaign (*digvijaya*) of Samudra Gupta (C. A.D. 335 – 380) was the next incident which throws a streak of light on the history of the region. Samudra Gupta, who laid the foundation of the Gupta Empire is accredited in his Allahabad pillar inscription to have inflicted defeat on many kings of the South (*sarvada-kshinapatharaja*). The kings with whom he came into conflict along with their territories are enumerated in the inscription. After the conquest of Mahendra of Kosala, and Vyaghraraja of the Vindhya forests, Samudra Gupta travelled along the eastern sea-board to enter the kingdom of Kalinga. He defeated two kings, Swamidatta and Damana of Kottura and Erandapalli, probably situated respectively in the Ganjam and Srikakulam Districts. Of greater significance is the fact that Samudra Gupta conquered the two ancient kingdoms of Kalinga, namely, Devarashtra and Pishtapura, located respectively in Visakhapatnam and East Godavari

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from Kodavali refers to a king, named Chanda Sati – See E. Ind. Vol. XVIII, pp. 316–19.

Districts.<sup>19</sup>

PISHTAPURA, SIMHAPURA AND DEVAPURA: The campaigns of Samudra Gupta must have caused some stir in the region of Kalinga and galvanised the stranded political set-up of the ancient times. For, we find that shortly after the invasion of Samudra Gupta, a new line of kings with their capitals at Pishtapura, Simhapura and Devapura emerging as powerful independent rulers of the lower region of Kalinga. Pishtapura lay in the southern border of Kalinga. Simhapura has been identified by scholars with Singupura near Srikakulam<sup>20</sup> and likewise Devapura with Devada in the Srungavarapukota Taluk of Visakhapatnam District.<sup>21</sup> These three kingdoms were thus associated with the lower region of Kalinga. However, the kings connected with those kingdoms issued their charters in their regnal years, and no copper-plate gives the full genealogy of the line. Though it is not possible to establish a correct chronology, it is certain that these three kingdoms flourished in the 4th and 5th centuries.<sup>22</sup> By the close of 5th century this line of rulers which ruled at Pishtapura, Simhapura and Devapura was replaced by a new dynasty, that of the Gangas, which emerged as one strong power in the region of lower Kalinga of which Simhachalam was a part.

### *The Gangas*

The Gangas who laid the foundation of their political power by the close of the 5th century were connected with the history of Kalinga for nearly nine centuries since then. They are usually described as the Eastern Gangas, so called to distinguish them from the Western Gangas of the Mysore area. The Ganga kings described themselves in their records as devotees of the Lord Gokarnaswami of Mahendragiri.<sup>23</sup> They ruled from their capitals at Dantapura and Kalinganagara. Dantapura of the Gangas which could be the famous Dantapura of the Buddhist Jataka stories has been identified with Dantavarapukota near

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion on the identification of the places mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription, see R. K. Mookerji, *The Gupta Empire*, 20 ff.

<sup>21</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XXIV, p. 50

<sup>22</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XXIII, p. 58

<sup>23</sup> See, Rajaguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. II

Srikakulam.<sup>24</sup> Kalinganagar is the same as Mukhalingam on the banks of Vamsadhara in the Srikakulam District.<sup>25</sup> The Gangas issued their records in the Gangeya Era, the initial year of which has been fixed by scholars at A. D. 498.<sup>26</sup>

THE EARLY GANGA RULERS: Indravarman was the first ruler of the Ganga dynasty who issued in the 39th year of the Gangeya Era (A. D. 538), a charter (the Jirjnigi Plates) from his capital Dantapura. He bore the title *Trikalingadhipati*.<sup>27</sup> Though we have no means of knowing how much territory was under his authority, we are singularly fortunate to have the testimony of a contemporary record which mentions that Indravarman made an attempt to crush the growing power of Indrabhattaraka of the Vishnukundin dynasty of the coastal Andhra. The Godavari grant (issued by Prithvimula who was one of the kings of the confederacy led by Indravarman) handsomely depicts the war waged between the two heroes and the way Indravarman overpowered the coastal Andhra king.<sup>28</sup> His successor Mahasamantavarman issued a grant from Saumyavana (not identifiable) and bore the title *Kalingadhipati*. Two grants the Narasangapalli and Urlam plates—issued from his capital at Kalinganagara have come to light.<sup>29</sup> The former grant is important. It reveals that the early Gangas, though they were devotees of Siva, encouraged Vaishnavism in their dominion. For the Narasingapalli plates record a donation of land by the king for the construction and maintenance of a temple dedicated to Lord Narayana.

### *The Chalukyan conquest and Visit of Hieun Tsang*

In the second quarter of the 6th century, Kalinga was conquered by Pulakesin II of the Chalukyas of Badami. The Chalukyan dynasty was founded by Jayasimha. His great grandson Pulakesin II was a great conqueror. By his conquests,

<sup>24</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XXXI, p. 200.

<sup>25</sup> G. V. Ramamurti was the first person to propose this identification - E. Ind. Vol. IV, pp. 187-8.

<sup>26</sup> There is no concensus of opinion among the scholars on the starting of the Ganga Era. The view that it commenced in 498-9 A.D. advocated by Mirashi, seems to be nearer the mark. For a discussion on the issue, see E. Ind. Vol. XXVI, 326 ff; XXVII, 192 ff.

<sup>27</sup> J. A. H. R. S. Vol. III, pp. 49-53.

<sup>28</sup> Godavari grant of Prithvimula, J. B. A. Vol. XVI, p. 114.

<sup>29</sup> E. Ind. Vol. XXX, p. 62; Vol. XVII, p. 300.

succinctly mentioned in the Aihole pillar inscription, he brought under his sway the entire kingdom extending from the Narmada in the north to the Krishna in the south and from coast to coast in the east and west.<sup>30</sup> It is stated in his Aihole inscription that the kingdom of Sakala Kalinga was burnt to the ground by Pulakesin II. The Ganga ruler who faced the onslaught appears to be Indravarman III, the issuer of Puri and Tekkali plates dated in the 137th and 154th Gangeya Era (A. D. 635 and A. D. 652). Pulakesin II conferred on his brother Kubjavishnu, who assisted him in his campaigns the kingdom of Vengi along with Kalinga. Kubjavishnu became the founder of a royal dynasty (described by historians as Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi) with its capital at Vengi (near Eluru, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh). Though the Gangas could ultimately regain the upper Kalinga, the lower region of Kalinga of which Simhachalam is a part remained under the authority of Chalukyas of Vengi for over several centuries. It was during this phase of the transfer of power from the Gangas to the Chalukyas that the country was visited by Hieun Tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim. He noted that the Kalinga was full of dense forests extending over hundreds of miles in which wild elephants roamed. The inhabitants were trustworthy though not very civilized. At the time of Hieun Tsang's visit, Buddhism was on the decline and Hinduism was flourishing.<sup>31</sup>

### *The Chalukyas of Vengi*

The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, as has already been pointed out, started their rule early in the 7th century. That the sphere of sovereignty of the first Chalukyan ruler, Vishnuvardhana, extended to Madhyama Kalinga can be known not only by the two copper-plate records found in the Visakhapatnam District,<sup>32</sup> but by the discovery of his copper-coins at Sankaram.<sup>33</sup> This authority of the Chalukyas over the region continued during the reign of his successor. In the 8th century Madhyama Kalinga became a refuge for the renegade prince Kokkilivarma who founded a collateral branch of the Chalukyas in this

<sup>30</sup> E. Ind. Vol. VI, 1 ff.

<sup>31</sup> See, Watter, *Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, p. 198.

<sup>32</sup> E. Ind. Vol. IX, p. 317 and I.A. XX, 3 ff.

<sup>33</sup> A.R.E. 1909, p. 4.



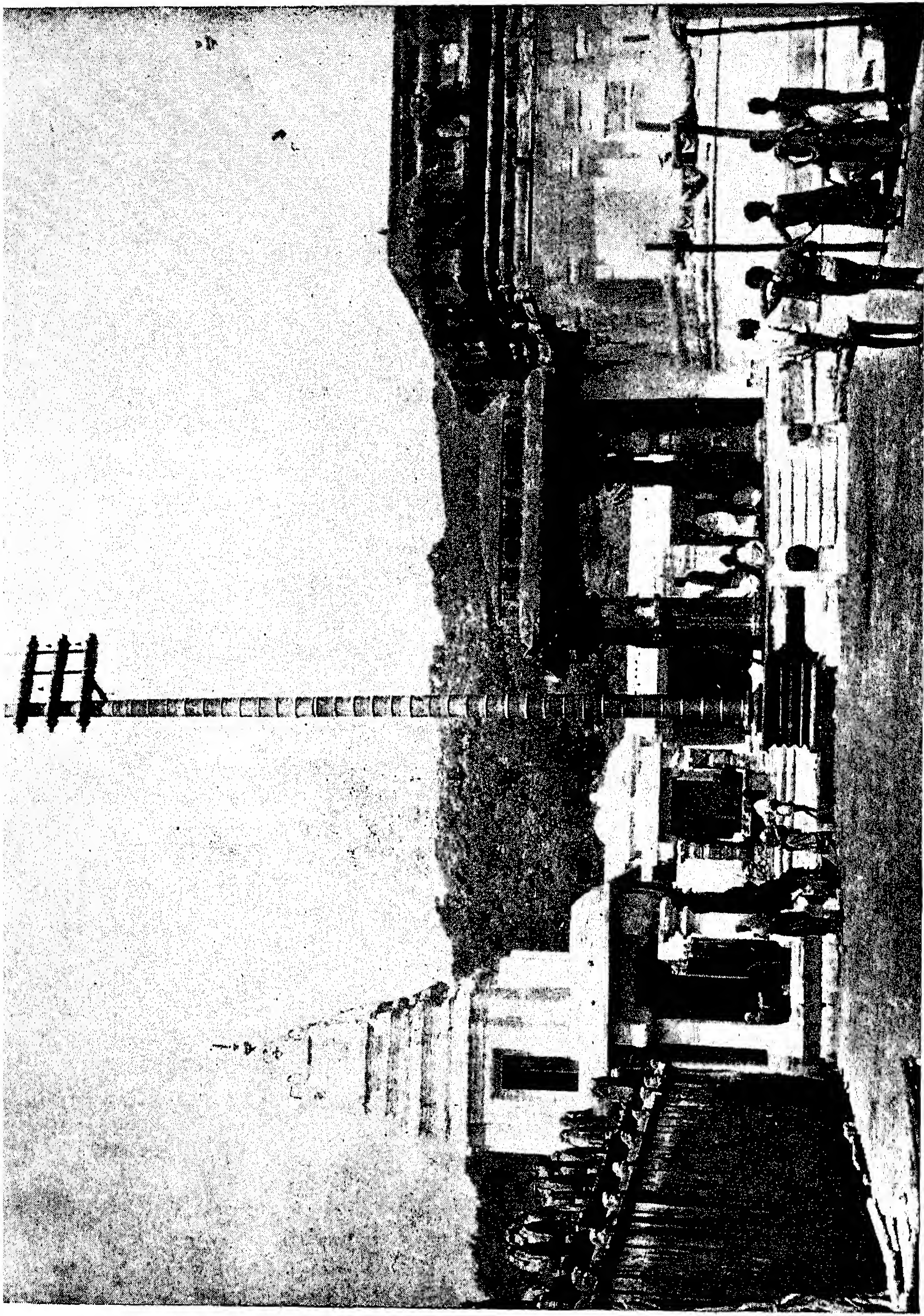


Fig. 6: The Temple (Side View showing the Dhwajasthambha and Gateway)

country with his capital at Elamanchi (the present Yellamanchili, 50 miles south of Simhachalam). This family ruled Madhyama Kalinga for four generations in the 8th century, and nothing is known of the dynasty after the death of Sarvalokasraya Kokkili-varma Maharaja.<sup>34</sup> Early in the 9th century, Dhruva, a king of the Rashtrakuta dynasty of Deccan, led an expedition into the Vengi country, conquered it and brought Kalinga also under his authority.<sup>35</sup> But the Rashtrakuta overlordship was a passing phase. Gunaga Vijayaditya (A.D. 841-881), the greatest of the Chalukyas of Vengi, conquered the whole of Kalinga once again, and even his successor Chalukya Bhima (A.D. 891-922) maintained his hold over the Kalinga region.<sup>36</sup> But during the reign of his successors Chalukyan grip over Madhyama Kalinga began to loosen.

THE CHALUKYAS VERSUS THE GANGAS: It was under the Eastern Chalukyan authority that the region of Madhyama Kalinga was integrated into the rest of Andhra. But their authority over Madhyama Kalinga suffered from natural geographical factors. The Vengi country lay far away from Kalinga proper, separated by the hilly tracts and the river Godavari. Geography bound the district with the Ganga Kingdom. But this factor was not appreciated by the Chalukyan kings who ruled over the fertile region extending from the river Godavari to the river Penna, and who had abundant natural resources at their disposal. They regarded Kalinga as an appendage to the kingdom of Vengi, and tried to establish their authority over the region. Any powerful Ganga ruler could have easily defied the authority of the southern kings, as he had the advantage of geography on his side. Thus when a revival of the Ganga power took place in the beginning of 10th century under Vajrahasta I (A. D. 896-940) the authority of Gangas was once again restored in Kalinga.<sup>37</sup> The expedition led by the Chalukyan king Vijayaditya Kollabhiganda in A. D. 922 against the Kalinga

<sup>34</sup> A.R.E. 1908-9 C.P. Grants 10, 11, 12 and 13.

<sup>35</sup> See N. Venkataramanayya, *The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi*, p. 85.

<sup>36</sup> A. R. E. 1908-9 Grant, No. 14.

<sup>37</sup> For chronology of Gangas starting from Vajrahasta I - see E. Ind. Vol. XXVIII, 230 ff. Vajrahasta I has been described in the records of his successors as one who united Kalinga which was formerly divided into five principalities. See E. Ind. Vol. IV, p. 189.

ruler ended in a disaster for the Chalukyas.<sup>38</sup> The internal strife of Vengi rulers left them no time to regain Kalinga. Though Vikramaditya (A. D. 929) claimed authority over Trikalanga, the Vengi rulers appear to have reconciled themselves to the loss of Kalinga to the Ganga rulers. It is in this spirit that the matrimonial alliance between the Chalukya kings and the Ganga kings came about. Chalukya Bhima II married a Kalinga princess and Danarnava was the offspring of the marriage.<sup>39</sup> Efforts to keep Danarnava on the Vengi throne by the Ganga ruler Kamarnava (A. D. 943-78) roused the wrath of Jatachoda Bhima who occupied Vengi throne in A. D. 973, putting Danarnava to flight. Jatachoda invaded Kalinga and brought it under his authority.<sup>40</sup>

**THE GANGAS AND THE CHOLAS :** In the reign of Vajrahasta II (A. D. 989-1016) the Kalinga country was exposed to another influence, namely, that of the Cholas of Tanjore. Rajaraja, the Chola monarch anxious to extend the Chola influence into Vengi, entered into matrimonial alliance with the sons of Danarnava, restored them to their patrimony and invaded Kalinga in pursuit of Jatavarma Choda.<sup>41</sup> There was another attack on this region during the reign of the Ganga King Madhukamarnava. The Gangas appear to have disturbed peace in Vengi by taking sides in a war of succession between the half brothers, Rajaraja Narendra and Vijayaditya VII. They sided Vijayaditya VII against Rajaraja Narendra, the candidate of Cholas. The Chola army, under the orders of Rajendra, not only assisted Rajaraja Narendra in driving out Vijayaditya VII out of Vengi, but, pursuing him, conquered Kalinga and even beyond.<sup>42</sup>

But once the Chola army withdrew, the Gangas reasserted themselves. Vajrahasta III (A. D. 1036-70) appears to have been a powerful king as evidenced by the records issued by him.<sup>43</sup> But

<sup>38</sup> I. A. XIII 213-4.

<sup>39</sup> See C. P. Grant No. 1 of 1917. The name of the Ganga Princess is Anki Devi.

<sup>40</sup> Kailasanatha temple epigraph of Jatachoda Bhima, E. Ind. Vol. XXI p. 32.

<sup>41</sup> S. I. I. (No. 51) of Vol. III mentions Kalinga in the list of conquered territories of Rajaraja.

<sup>42</sup> The campaign was the one in which Rajendra planted a pillar of Victory at Mahendragiri and proceeded as far as the Ganges to win the title Gangaikonda Chola. See A. R. A. S. C., 1915-16, p. 36.

<sup>43</sup> See A. R. E. 1918, para 18.



even he in the closing year of his reign involved himself in the affairs of Vengi, and invited another invasion of the Cholas on Kalinga.<sup>44</sup>

### *Ganga-Chola Alliance—a Landmark*

Devendravarma, the son of Vajrahasta III, who ascended the Ganga throne in A.D. 1070, repaired the loss of prestige sustained by the Gangas at the hands of the Cholas in the reign of his predecessors. He is described in the grants of his successor Anantavarma Choda Ganga as the great ruler who conquered Cholas, who married the Chola princess Raja Sundari and who was responsible for the reinstatement of the Eastern Chalukya Vijayaditya VII on the throne of Vengi.<sup>45</sup> The Chola ruler of the record was Kulottunga. He is no other than the Eastern Chalukyan prince Rajendra who occupied the Chola throne in A.D. 1070. Matrimonial ties bound the Chalukyas and the Cholas of this time. The Eastern Chalukyan prince could successfully press his claim to the Chola throne, and threatened to become the joint ruler of the Vengi and Chola kingdoms. The victory of the Ganga king Devendravarman over Kulottunga must have taken place in the early part of Kulottunga's reign, when the latter was still struggling to stabilize his position. The forces of the Ganga ruler appear to have conquered the Chola forces at Vengi and installed Vijayaditya VII on the Vengi throne.<sup>46</sup> Kulottunga made peace with Devendravarma Rajaraja, by offering his daughter Rajasundari to him. The Cholas and the Gangas were bound by matrimonial ties. This alliance was a landmark in the history of Madhyama Kalinga as it shaped the course of events in the last quarter of 11th century, when the boy prince Ananta Varma Choda Ganga, the offspring of the alliance, ascended the throne in A. D. 1078.

KULOTTUNGA—VISAKHAPATNAM AND SIMHACHALAM: Kulottunga became the ruler of Vengi and Tanjore in 1076 and started the new line of rulers known as Chalukya Cholas. He had to involve himself in the Kalinga affairs in the same year

<sup>44</sup> Virarajendra's Manimangalam inscription—E. Ind. Vol XXI, 232 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Indian Antiquary, Vol. 18, pp. 161-76.

<sup>46</sup> See N. Venkataramanayya, *The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi*.

for guarding the interest of his young grandson Anantavarma Choda Ganga. The boy's claim was in jeopardy as there appeared a rival candidate in the person of Devendravarma.<sup>47</sup> Hence he wanted to bring the Kalinga country under his domain on behalf of his grandson. Acting under his instructions, Rajaraja Mummadi Chola, Kulottunga's son and viceroy in Vengi, marched into Kalinga with his chieftain Telugu Bhima accompanying him.<sup>48</sup> After this conquest, the Chalukya Cholas established their power in the lower regions of Kalinga.<sup>49</sup> And for the first time Simhachalam and its environs get documented in the history of Kalinga. An inscription of A. D. 1087 (*Sakabdenidhi (bindu) khendu ganite*), the earliest of all the inscriptions of the Simhachalam Temple, records the donation of a merchant of Penugonda.<sup>50</sup> It was during this period again that the name of Visakhapatnam was changed into Kulottunga Chola Pattana, and coming as it did under the influence of Tamil merchants, it became a port of some importance.<sup>51</sup> Indeed the Chalukya Cholas introduced a new dynamism in the region.

SECOND CAMPAIGN OF KULOTTUNGA : The early Kalinga campaign of Kulottunga did not settle the issues in Kalinga. Devendravarma Anantavarma continued to aspire for the Ganga throne.<sup>52</sup> Another campaign was called for, and Kulottunga sent his son Virachoda as his viceroy to Vengi, with the express object of conquering the North.<sup>53</sup> The actual conquest took

<sup>47</sup> Kambakaya copper-plate grant of Devendravarma, pp. 273-74. See *Kalinga Samchika*, p. 79.

<sup>48</sup> Eluru grant of Rajaraja Choda of the year A. D. 1096 (A. R. E. 1921 C. P. Grant No. 3) records that Telugu Bhima was rewarded for the services he rendered in Kulottunga's wars with the kings of Kuntala and Kalinga. Evidently the Kuntala Chalukyas were in league with Kalinga Devendravarma Anantavarma—See Chapter on 'Chalukya Cholas' in Telugu Vijnana Sarvaswamu, Volume III, pp. 192-3.

<sup>49</sup> The Chalukya Chola suzerainty is proved beyond doubt by the Teki grant of Rajaraja Choda Ganga of the year A.D. 1087. It fixes the northern boundary of the Vengi country in the Mahendragiri hill range. See E. Ind. VI, 334 ff.

<sup>50</sup> S. I. I. Volume VI, No. 1162. For a discussion of the date, see *infra* Chapter V. There is also a stone inscription of S. 101(3) of the 17th regnal year of Anantavarma Deva at Visakhapatnam itself. But there is a controversy regarding the date of the inscription—See *proceedings of Indian History Congress*—12th Session, 1949.

<sup>51</sup> See A.R.E. 1909 ii, para 45.

<sup>52</sup> Gara grama stone Inscription of Devendravarma's 7th regnal year dated in S. 1005-1083. See A.R.E. 391 of 1932-33.

<sup>53</sup> E.I. Vol. V, p. 70.

place between the years 1092 and 1096.<sup>54</sup> A Tamil inscription of the year A.D. 1099 from the Simhachalam temple which records the gifts of a minister (*sandhi vighraha*) of Kulottunga testifies to the second conquest of the region by the Chalukya Chola generals. It is possible that the Chola army might have stayed on these premises during the early years of Anantavarma to guard his interests.

ANANTAVARMA AND THE CHANGE OF GANGA CAPITAL: Anantavarma Choda Ganga, who could establish his claim on the Ganga throne with the aid of Kulottunga, proved himself not only to be one of the greatest of the Ganga kings but one who threatened the Chalukya Chola influence in South Kalinga. After coming to age, he asserted his authority over Kalinga proper and then undertook to expand his authority further north and south. By the date of his Visakhapatnam grant (A.D. 1118), he was powerful enough not only to extend his authority over Utkala but also to prop the failing fortunes of the Vengi ruler.<sup>55</sup> The Ganga power reached its meridian of glory in the reign of Anantavarma Choda Ganga and its boundaries extended from the mouth of the Ganges in the north to the river Godavari in the south. Anantavarma changed his capital from Kalinganagara to Cuttack (Varanasi Kataka of the inscriptions) to suit the needs of the new Ganga empire. With this change of the imperial seat to Kataka, the Madhyama Kalinga began to experience the cultural impact of the Odda country. Anantavarma's reign also marks of the beginning of the Vaishnavite revival. He was the builder of the famous Puri temple and described himself as a devout worshipper of Vishnu (Paramabhagavata). Though no inscriptions of the reign are to be found in the Simhachalam temple, many hail from Visakhapatnam District.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>This is mentioned in the 26th year of Kulottunga and later (A.R.E. 807, 373, 304 of 1907 and 463 of 1911). This appears to be the Kalinga campaign of Kulottunga mentioned in the literary work *Kalingattunpparini* and the Draksharama epigraph dated in the 23rd year of Kulottunga (S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 1239). For *contra*, see *E. Ind.* Vol. XXII, 138 ff. and *Journal of Oriental Research*, Vol. X, 255 ff. According to some historians, there was another invasion of Kalinga which Kulottunga is accredited to have undertaken during the last years of his reign. This is doubtful. For, Kulottunga was busy in stabilising his own position in Vengi from the attacks of Western Chalukyas (See *Early History of Deccan*, Vol. I, p. 365).

<sup>55</sup> *Ind. Ant.* Vol. XVII, 161 ff.

THE GANGAS AND THE VELANATI CHODAS : From the time of the death of Anantavarma Choda Ganga in A. D. 1152 till the accession of an equally powerful ruler Ananga Bhima on the Ganga throne by about A. D. 1211, Simhachalam and its environs became the battle-ground of wars between the Eastern Gangas and the Velanati Chodas. The familiar rhythm repeated itself: the political authority of the lower Kalinga shifted to and fro. The Velanati Chodas who owed nominal suzerainty to the Chalukya Chola kings held the real source of authority at Vengi. They resented the Ganga expansion in the lower regions of Kalinga and tried to restore the Vengi supremacy over this region. The inscription of the Chalukya Chola king Rajaraja Deva at Simhachalam (A.D. 1151)<sup>57</sup>, the epigraph of Prolaya Peggada, (the Minister and Commander-in-Chief of Velanati Kulottunga Rajendra Choda) in Sriramapuram in Visakhapatnam District (A.D. 1168)<sup>58</sup>, and the several records of Velanati Prithvisvara at Srikurmam (A.D. 1188)<sup>59</sup>, Dimili (A.D. 1193)<sup>60</sup> and Visakhapatnam itself (A.D. 1199)<sup>61</sup>, bear witness to the attempts made by the Velanati Chodas to bring under their authority the lower Kalinga. This was accomplished in the reign of Velanati Prithvisvara (A.D. 1178-1203) and the Gangas were obliged to accept the suzerainty of Prithvisvara over the lower region of thir kingdom.

### *The Gangas and the Kakatiyas*

Early in the 13th century, the Velanati king himself had to bow down to the Kakatiya ruler, Ganapathi Deva of Hanumakonda-Warrangal. Ganapathi ascended the throne in A.D. 1198. About A.D. 1209, he was able to bring the entire Vengi country under his authority by defeating Prithvisvara.<sup>62</sup> Ganapathi was not satisfied with merely defeating Prithvisvara: he wanted to possess all the territories held by Prithvisvara in Kalinga. The

<sup>56</sup> The earliest of these dated in the 5th, 11th and 21st years hail from Chittivalasa (*The Indian Archaeology*) 1956-57, p. 40.

<sup>57</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1174.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, Vol. X, No. 173.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, No. 1338.

<sup>60</sup> *Indian Archaeology* 58-59, p. 58

<sup>61</sup> S.I.I. Vol. X, No. 211.

<sup>62</sup> See *Early History of Deccan* Vol. II, p. 604.

Kakatiya army, in one of the brilliant exploits of military power, brought the whole of Kalinga and even beyond under their authority by the year A.D. 1211.<sup>63</sup> This was the beginning of a continuous warfare between two houses, the Gangas and the Kakatiyas, in the years that followed. The Ganga kings tried to maintain their authority in the country east of the Godavari river and the Kakatiyas wanted to possess it for themselves.

**ANANGA BHIMA:** Ananga Bhima (A. D. 1211–37) who ascended the Ganga throne in A. D. 1211 was an energetic king. Within five years after his accession, he was able to release the Kalinga country from the yoke of the Kakatiyas and establish the supremacy of the Gangas in the region. Ananga Bhima was the first Ganga ruler who incised his inscriptions in the Simhachalam temple, and his reign marked the beginning of the continuous rule of the Gangas for over two centuries in the Madhyama Kalinga.<sup>64</sup> Ananga Bhima made a reprisal to the attack of Kakatiyas by carrying on an offensive campaign.<sup>65</sup> He was also shrewd enough to understand the changing political complexion of North India and the menace of the Muslim Sultanate of Deccan. He repulsed the attack made by the Muslims of Bengal and retained Orissa under his authority.<sup>66</sup> He was succeeded by an equally powerful king, Narasimha I.

**NARASIMHA I:** Narasimha I (A. D. 1237–63) ranks as the most powerful of the later Ganga Kings. During his reign, the Ganga empire reached its logical limits—the Mahanadi in the North and the Godavari in the South. Narasimha I realised fully well the potential danger of the evergrowing Muslim power of the times and carried on an offensive war against the Muslim governor of Bengal. Many inscriptions of his successors praise Narasimha for the victories he won against the Muslims.<sup>67</sup> To avenge the earlier raid of the Kakatiyas on his frontiers, Narasimha organised a campaign against them. The evidence of

<sup>63</sup> See '*The Early History of Deccan*' for a detailed account of the invasion and the epigraphical and literary evidence pertaining to it, p. 606.

<sup>64</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 1180, 1209 and 1201.

<sup>65</sup> An inscription from Draksharama acquaints us with a commander of the king who bears the title 'the one who conquered with ease the chief of Vengi' – S. I. I. IV, No. 1252.

<sup>66</sup> Chatesvara Ins. E. Ind. XXIX, p. 127.

<sup>67</sup> Kendupatna plates, 5 — See *Kalinga Sanchika*, p. 45.



the contemporary inscriptions shows that Narasimha tried to bring the area around the river Godavari under his control but did not meet with success.<sup>68</sup> Narasimha Deva's name is ever remembered as the builder of the great Sun Temple at Konarak.<sup>69</sup> His interest in the Simhachalam temple is noteworthy. He carried on a wholesale renovation of the temple, and this one act made the cultural life of the region active.<sup>70</sup>

THE SUCCESSORS OF NARASIMHA I: Narasimha I was succeeded by Bhanudeva (A. D. 1264-78) and Narasimha II (A. D. 1278-1305). The two kings reaped fully the benefit of the work of their predecessors and kept up the power and splendour of the empire. Both these rulers distinguished themselves for their liberality. Shortly after the reign of Narasimha II, this glorious period came to an end. The Gangas were subjected to severe strain by the attacks of the Sultans of Delhi and Bengal from the North and later by the incursions of the newly risen powerful neighbours like the Reddis of the Coastal Andhra, the Recherla chiefs of Telangana and the Rayas of Vijayanagara. Their power declined gradually in the 14th century, and in this process, the feudatory dynasties grew in strength in the southern part of their dominions.

### *The Feudatory Dynasties of Kalinga*

During the last quarter of the 13th century many feudatory dynasties came into existence in the region around *Madhyama Kalinga* and the walls of Simhachalam temple teem with inscriptions registering their numerous donations. Prominent among the feudatory chiefs were the Matyas of Oddadi, the Chalukyas of Elamanchi, the Surabhis of Jantarunadu and the Silavamsa chiefs of Nandapura. It must be noted that all the four families inhabited the tracts of land which now constitute the present Visakhapatnam District. Their upsurge has to be traced to three factors. In the first place, the change of the imperial

<sup>68</sup> An inscription from the Lingaraja temple mentions that Narasimha terrified the generals of king Ganapati in the year 1242. (O. H. R. J. Vol. V, 307). As against this inscription, Manuma Siddhi, a feudatory of Ganapati Deva claims victories over the Kalingas in a battle fought at the river Godavari in the year A. D. 1257. (A. R. E. 580, 1907).

<sup>69</sup> This is mentioned in the records of his successors.

<sup>70</sup> S. I. I. Vol. Vi, No. 1142.



Fig. 7: The Marriage-Hall (Side View)

capital of the Gangas from Mukhalingam to Cuttack made their position in the southern regions of the empire weak. Secondly, the Ganga king Bhanudeva introduced the system of ruling the country through trusted feudatories.<sup>71</sup> Hence the imperial policy itself was favourable to their rise. Thirdly the Ganga kings since the time of Anangabhima were put to the necessity of vigilantly guarding their northern frontier from the covetous eyes of the Muslim governors of Bengal and the Sultans of Delhi and hence could not pay much attention to the southern Kalinga.

**THE MATSYAS OF ODDADI:** The Matsyas of Oddadi were the most prominent among the feudatory families of Kalinga. This Oddadi of the inscriptions is the present Vaddadi, 30 miles west of Simhachalam. The kings of this dynasty associated themselves with Simhadrinatha, and some of them bore the epithet 'the worshipper of the two lotus feet of Simhachalanatha'.<sup>72</sup> Many of the inscriptions of the kings as well as of their officials figure in the temple. A few of their epigraphs are inscribed under the Fish Emblem (*Matsya lanchana*).<sup>73</sup> Arjuna Deva (A.D. 1231-92) is the earliest of the Matsyas to figure in the Simhachalam Inscriptions.<sup>74</sup> He did not acknowledge the suzerainty of any overlord. But evidence shows that the Matsyas recognised the Ganga authority over the land tacitly.<sup>75</sup> The Matsyas contracted matrimonial alliances with the Silavamsa kings of Nandapura and became a powerful entity in the Western region of the present Visakhapatnam District.<sup>76</sup>

**CHALUKYAS OF ELAMANCHI:** Contemporaneous with Matsyas and equally influential were the Chalukyas of Elamanchi, a branch of Chalukyas of Vengi who first settled at Pithapuram and later moved to Elamanchi. They had their capitals at Elamanchi and also at Panchadharla, situated in close proximity to Elamanchi. Many records of the chiefs hail from the

<sup>71</sup> Kendupatna plates of Narasimha II - '*Nistaribhih patraih Sodashabhih visuddha charita*'.

<sup>72</sup> *Simhachala natha padakamala dvandvanushktasaya* - See S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 877.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, Nos. 727, 869 and 937.

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>75</sup> The phrase '*Gangavamsa nidrohadhavala mandalika*' (a feudatory whose conduct is pure by not doing any harm to the Gangas) applied to a prince of the Matsya dynasty indicates that they recognised Ganga suzerainty over the land tacitly.

<sup>76</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 950.

Dharmalingeswara temple of Panchadharla and some of them give an elaborate *prasasti* of these chiefs.<sup>77</sup> The founder of the line was one Vijayaditya, a scion of the Chalukyas of Vengi. The earliest of the records of the Chalukyas to be found in the Simhachalam temple is the epigraph of Upendra II of A.D. 1266.<sup>78</sup> The Chalukyas contracted matrimonial alliances with the Gangas and stood by their side as loyal feudatories.<sup>79</sup>

### *The Surabhis and the Silavamsa Kings*

The other two dynasties of Kalinga were the Surabhis of Jantarunadu and the Silavamsa Kings of Nandapura. Jantarunadu can be identified with the region of the present Srungavarapukota *taluk* of the Visakhapatnam district. The places mentioned in the inscription of these chiefs found in the temple — Lakumvarapukota (Lakkavarapukota), Kailympundi (Kallempudi), Chintada and Alamanda—can all be located within a range of ten miles from Srungavarapukota.<sup>80</sup> All the records of these chiefs, except the one from a place called Boni, hail from the Simhachalam Temple. The earliest is the record of Gangaraja of A. D. 1285.<sup>81</sup> If the Surabhis controlled the Srungavarapukota region, the Silvamsa chiefs made themselves influential in the agency tracts on the western extremity of the Visakhapatnam District.

### *Madhyama Kalinga in 14th Century*

The political life of the Madhyama Kalinga in the 14th century was not a happy one. The Gangas continued to rule over the land and the temple registers the donative records of the successive Ganga rulers: Bhanudeva II (A.D. 1305-27), Narasimha III (1327-52), Bhanudeva III (1353-78), Narasimha IV (1378-1409) and Bhanudeva IV (1409-34). The actual authority, as we have already seen, rested in the feudatory dynasties which divided the country into small units. Even the petty chiefs of the Godavari region, like the Koppula and Korukonda chiefs

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, No. 662.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, No. 692.

<sup>79</sup> Jachalla Devi and Hera Devi wives of Bhanu Deva I and Bhanu Deva IV were Chalukyan princesses.

<sup>80</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 925, 725, 1011 and 723.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, No. 713. The earliest record of the dynasty is of the year A. D. 1285 (No. 713).

who recorded donations to the temple, did not recognise the overlordship of any ruler.<sup>82</sup> This disintegration of political power in the 14th century invited incursions from without. The Reddi Kings of the coastal Andhra, the Recherla chiefs of *Telangana*, the Rayas of Vijayanagar and the Reddis of Rajamahendrarajya vied with one another to possess Kalinga.

**THE GANGAS AND THE REDDIS:** The Reddi kings who rose to power in the coastal Andhra in the second quarter of the 14th century cherished a strong desire to extend their territory up to Simhadri. The Reddis were able to establish their authority in the heart of the coastal Andhra bounded by the Krishna river in the North, Nellore in the South and Srisailem in the West.<sup>83</sup> Hemmed in by the Velamas of *Telangana* and the Sultans of Bahmini kingdom on the one side and the kingdom of the powerful rulers of Vijayanagara on the other, the only outlet of expansion for the Reddis was towards Simhadri. This ambition of the Reddi rulers was realised in the reign of Anavema (A.D. 1374-83). In the initial years of his reign he launched a northern campaign. Defeating the chiefs of the Godavari region, the Manchikonda chiefs of Korukonda and the Koppula chiefs of Pithapuram, he finally conquered Simhadri.<sup>84</sup> His inscription of S. 1297 (A.D. 1375) in the temple which registers a gift of a Village in the Kalinga rajya, shows the defeat of Bhanudeva III.<sup>85</sup> Narsimha IV the successor of Bhanudeva III, had to bear another attack on his dominions in the reign of Kumaragiri (A.D. 1386-1402), the successor of Anavema. His generalissimo Kataya Vema made a victorious march and added the territory up to Simhadri.<sup>86</sup> His inscription from the temple of S. 1308 (A.D. 1386) records the gifts of Kataya Vema for the fulfilment of his wishes.<sup>87</sup> After this northern campaign, Kataya Vema set up an eastern kingdom of Reddi Rajya with capital at Rajahmundry.<sup>88</sup> This kingdom was to safeguard the authority of Reddis in Kalinga.

<sup>82</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 821, 822, 823 and 924, 841, 1084 and 1090.

<sup>83</sup> See M. S. Sarma *History of Reddi Kingdoms*, p. 88.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 116 ff.

<sup>85</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 785.

<sup>86</sup> See M.S. Sarma, op. cit., 142 ff.

<sup>87</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 781.

<sup>88</sup> See M.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 1.



THE GANGAS AND THE RECHERLA CHIEFS : The Recherla chiefs of Telangana ruling from their twin capitals of Rachakonda and Devarakonda emulated the Reddis, their traditional foes, and tried to extend their own authority towards Kalinga. Anavota, (A.D. 1361-1384) the real architect of the Recherla power, invaded Kalinga shortly after the campaign of Anavema. Narasimha IV, the Ganga ruler, purchased peace from the Recherla chief by offering his daughter Kanaka Lakshmi to Kumara Anavota, the grandson of Anavota.<sup>89</sup> In spite of their matrimonial alliance the Recherla chiefs did not stop interfering in the affairs of Kalinga. The campaigns of Kataya Vema in the southern Kalinga displaced a choda chief named Annadeva Choda. The Recherla chiefs gave refuge to Annadeva Choda. In an attempt to replace this chief and thus humiliate the Reddis, Anavota II (A.D. 1399-1425) invaded Kalinga during the first decade of the 15th century. The inscription of Recherla chiefs of S. 1329 (A.D. 1467) at Simhachalam bears testimony to this campaign.<sup>90</sup> The Recherla chiefs were not successful in their attempts.

THE GANGAS, THE REDDIS OF RAJAMAHENDRA AND THE VIJAYANAGARA RULERS : Bhanudeva IV who succeeded Narasimha IV in A.D. 1409 tried to restore the position of the Gangas in the Madhyama and Dakshina Kalingas.<sup>91</sup> The conditions were propitious for him to carry out his plan. The Reddi kingdom after the death of Kumaragiri in A.D. 1402 became a house divided against itself. The Kondaviti kingdom under Peda Komati Vema (A.D. 1402-20) plunged into a deadly war with the eastern kingdom of Rajamahendra ruled by Kataya Vema and his successors. Bhanudeva IV launched his attack on Rajamahendra Rajya during the year A.D. 1416-17, when the kingdom was experiencing a serious crisis after the death of Kumaragiri II (A.D. 1414-1416-17).<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> For a succinct account of the Recherla Chiefs and the Gangas, see M. S. Sarma, *Telugu Vijnana Sarvaswam*, Vol. III, p. 270. An inscription from the temple (No. 1081) records the gifts of Kanaka Lakshmi, wife of Anavota Nayaka.

<sup>90</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1100.

<sup>91</sup> The events of the reign of Bhanudeva IV are analysed in an article : 'The Gajapati Bhanudeva IV' - See J.O.R. Vol. IXX, 135 ff.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p. 138.

Bhanudeva IV would have occupied the Rajamahendra Rajya but for the timely intervention of Vijayanagar troops under Devaraya.<sup>93</sup> However, his next attempt was successful. Bhanudeva IV could firmly establish his position in the Madhyama and Dakshina Kalingas during the years S. 1341 (A.D. 1419) and S. 1342 (A.D. 1420). He was able to extend his authority over Rajamahendra Rajya and hold the Ganga power unabated till A.D. 1428.<sup>94</sup>

**THE FALL OF THE GANGAS :** The erstwhile supremacy of Bhanudeva IV in the Madhyama and Dakshina Kalingas was brought to an end by the Vijayanagar rulers. Since the days of Devaraya I (A.D. 1406-22) they tried to extend their territory towards coastal Andhra. The decline of Reddi power in coastal Andhra after A.D. 1420 made it easy for Devaraya II (A.D. 1422-46) to effect a systematic conquest of coastal Andhra.<sup>95</sup> After conquering the kingdom of Kondavidu, the Vijayanagar army marched forward, defeated Bhanudeva IV, and occupied Simhadri. The inscription of Teluguraya, a chief of Devaraya II, in the temple is a proof of this conquest.<sup>96</sup> Bhanudeva IV continued to stay in Madhyama Kalinga. His latest record at Simhachalam is dated S. 1352 (A.D. 1430). But the chiefs of Rajahmundry, Allaya Vema and Virabhadra, did not allow him peace. They invaded and conquered Madhyama Kalinga. Two records from the Simhachalam temple bear witness to the success of the chiefs of Rajamahendra Rajya.<sup>97</sup> The efforts of Bhanudeva IV to restore the Ganga power in the Madhyama and Dakshina Kalingas proved suicidal. During his preoccupation with the affairs of the southern dominion, a political revolution took place and ousted the Ganga power from Orissa also.

<sup>93</sup> The Vijayanagar rulers were bound by matrimonial ties with the family of Kataya Vema. A daughter of Harihara II (A.D. 1377-1404) was given in marriage to Kataya Vema. This marriage has been alluded to in Vemavaram plates of Allada Vema - E. Ind. Vol. XIII.

<sup>94</sup> This has been referred to in the *Kaifiyats* of the villages of coastal Andhra. See J.O.R., Vol. XIX, p. 142.

<sup>95</sup> See J.O.R. Vol. XIX, p. 145.

<sup>96</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 905.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, Nos. 1167 and 1168.

### *The Gajapatis*

The Gangas were displaced by the Suryavamsi Gajapatis about the year A.D. 1434. Kapilesvara, one of the ministers of Bhanudeva usurped the throne, put an end to the decrepit Ganga dynasty and started the rule of Suryavamsa Gajapatis in Kalinga. Kapilesvara must be ranked as one of the military geniuses of his times. He successfully matched his strength with the Bahminis and Vijayanagar rulers. The title '*navakoti karnata kalvaragesvara*' assumed by him in A.D. 1464, indicates his success against the Bahminis of Kalvarga (Gulbarga) and the Vijayanagar rulers of Karnataka.<sup>98</sup> About this time, he became an undisputed monarch of all the land from the Ganges in the North to the river Kaveri in the South. In the Madhyama Kalinga the entire pattern of disintegrated political system was organised into well-knit 'Kalinga Dandapatha'. Even by A. D. 1443, the date of his first inscription at Simhachalam, Kapilesvara subdued the important feudatory chiefs of Kalinga. The Matsyas of Oddadi and the Chalukyas of Elamanchi bowed before his might and accepted his authority. The lesser dynasties like the Surabhis of Jantarunadu and the Silavamsa kings of Nandapura perished in the course of his campaign. The territory was administered by officers directly under his supervision, and the Simhachalam temple registers gifts of these officers of Kapilesvara, namely, the *mahapatras* of Kalinga Dandapatha.<sup>99</sup>

**THE SUCCESSORS OF KAPILESVARA:** The hold of Gajapatis over Simhachalam and its environs was firm in the reign of his successor Purushottama (A.D. 1468-91) who proved himself to be a worthy son of a worthy father. Though in the initial years of his reign civil war between him and his brother Hamvira divided the Gajapati possessions into two halves, these differences were amicably settled by A. D. 1476 and Purushottama could restore the Gajapati power once again.<sup>100</sup> Purushottama kept up the aggressive warfare of his father, won victories over the Bahmanis and the Vijayanagar and established once again

<sup>98</sup> Gopinathapur Inscription - *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, Vol. LXIX, 171 ff.

<sup>99</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 895, 903, 914 etc.

<sup>100</sup> See R. Subrahmanyam, *Gajapatis of Orissa*, 76 ff.

the Gajapati authority in the entire area from the Ganges in the north to the river Pennar in the south. But his son Pratapa Rudra (A. D. 1497-1538) had to pay a price for the aggressive policy adopted by his predecessors against the Vijayanagar rulers and had to bow to the might of Krishnadevaraya, the greatest of the Vijayanagar rulers.

### *Krishnaraya*

Krishnaraya's victorious campaigns started in A.D. 1513 with the capture of Udayagiri, the stronghold of Gajapatis in the Andhra country.<sup>101</sup> This was followed by a systematic conquest of Gajapati forts in the Andhra country. He reached Simhachalam in A.D. 1516, the date of his first record at the place.<sup>102</sup> The record states that Krishnaraya visited the place after the capture of the forts like Udayagiri, Kondavidu, Kondapalli and Rajamahendravaram and made a number of gifts in money and kind to Lord Simhadrinatha for the merit of his father and mother. From Simhadri, Krishnaraya challenged Prataparudra to give him battle and stayed at the place waiting for the Gajapati who never appeared on the scene. Tired of waiting, he went back to his capital leaving the army with instructions to continue the fight. Vijayanagar forces under the leadership of, Rayasam Kondamarasayya, a general, pressed on to the heart of the Gajapati dominions. Prataparudra sued for peace, and a diplomatic marriage ended the friction between the two powers. Krishnaraya married the daughter of Prataparudra and allowed him to keep the territory north of the river Krishna.<sup>103</sup> The second record of Krishnaraya of A. D. 1519 hailing from the Simhachalam Temple belongs to this period of rapprochement between the Gajapatis and the Rayas.<sup>104</sup>

**THE DECLINE OF GAJAPATIS:** The hold of the Gajapatis over Kalinga Dandapatha continued till the death of Prataparudra in 1533. But the dismemberment of the empire started a decade earlier. Though Prataparudra could purchase peace from the Rayas, danger from another quarter threatened his empire. Sultan Kuli Kutb Shah of Golkonda became powerful

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 98 ff.

<sup>102</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 696 of S. 1438.

<sup>103</sup> See Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, p. 320.

<sup>104</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 695 of the year 1441.

in Deccan and started the policy of reducing the number of infidels of Telangana from the borders of Warrangal to Masulipatnam and Rajahmundry.<sup>105</sup> The Sultan commenced the conquest of Telangana in 1519-20. Within three years, he was slowly penetrating into the coastal Andhra.<sup>106</sup> By 1530, the Golkonda Sultan was the master of Kondapalli and Prataparudra could not check the growth of the power of the Sultan. He however made an attack on Vijayanagar territories in A.D. 1531 but was repulsed.<sup>107</sup> Faced with defeats on all fronts, Prataparudra spent the remaining years of his life in obscurity till his death in A.D. 1538.

Prataparudra was succeeded by his two sons Kalu-a-deva and Kakharu-a-deva who ruled only for a short period of a year or two. The throne was usurped by Govinda Vidyadhara in A.D. 1540.<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, the Sultan of Golkonda became the master of coastal Andhra defeating the Gajapati forces of the area. The usurper, Vidyadhara, was unequal to meet the challenge and concluded a treaty with Sultan Kuli by which the Godavari became the boundary between Golkonda and Orissa.<sup>109</sup>

**THE USURPER'S RULE:** The Kalinga region was not affected by the new development in the coastal Andhra: it continued to be under the authority of the rulers of Varanasikataka. Govinda Vidyadhara started a dynasty of his own. He ruled for seven years and was followed by Chakrapratapa (8 years), Narasingaraya (1 year) and Raghudevaraya. At the commencement of Raghudevaraya's reign there occurred a second usurpation. Mukundadeva, a minister ascended the throne in 1558-59 and started his own line.<sup>110</sup> The rulers continued to exercise their authority over Kalinga. An inscription from the Simhachalam temple informs us that after Mukundadeva the ritual in the temple came to a standstill.<sup>111</sup> This testimony may be an indication of the political unrest in the region under the successors of Mukundadeva.

<sup>105</sup> Briggs, *Feristha*, Vol. III, pp. 352-53.

<sup>106</sup> See A. R. E. 153 of 1913.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, Part II, Para 11.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 1906 II, 59.

<sup>109</sup> Briggs, *Feristha*, Vol. III, p. 368.

<sup>110</sup> A.R.E. para ii, 59.

<sup>111</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1184.



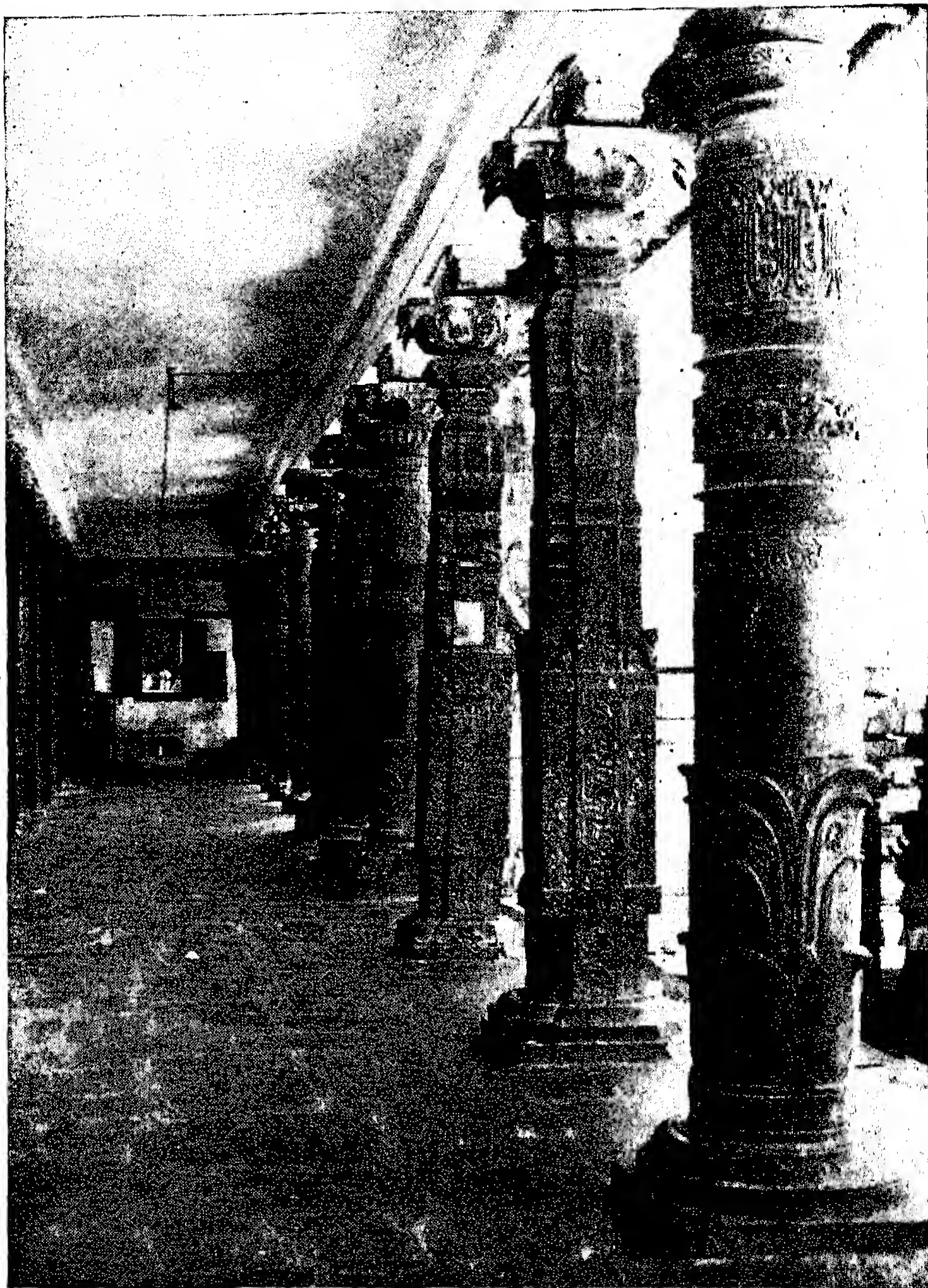


Fig. 8: The Cloister (Side View)

### *The Muslim Rule in Kalinga*

In the last quarter of the 16th century Muhammad Kuli (A. D. 1580–1612) who was already the master of the Telugu country made an attempt to bring the Kalinga region under his authority. Though the Kutb Shahis of Golkonda came to possess the entire coastal Andhra after the defeat of Vijayanagar in the battle of Rakshasa Tangadi (A.D. 1565), they were faced with the rebellions of the chiefs. One such broke out in the initial years of Muhammad Kuli's reign. To uphold his authority, the Sultan sent a punitive expedition under his minister Malka Amin Malka.<sup>112</sup> Starting from Golkonda, this minister made a victorious march through the coastal Andhra, and, egged on by his successes, he continued his march and reached Kalinga in 1599. An inscription of that year from Srikurmam records that Malka Amin cut off the heads of the local chiefs and drove away Mukunda Bahubalindra, the ruler of the land, from the region of the Kalinga.<sup>113</sup> But Amin Malka carried his work in Kalinga a bit too far. His policy was too blood-stained and bred more disorder than peace. So in 1604, the Sultan sent a Hindu officer, one Asvarayudu, to set matters right in Kalinga. This Asvarayudu, a scion of Padmanayaka community and of Vipparla Gotra effected a conquest of Kalinga including the outlying territories like Viraghattam (Virakutam, in Palakonda taluk of the Srikakulam District) and restored order and peace.<sup>114</sup> This was the beginning of the Muslim rule in the Madhyama Kalinga.

**THE KUTB SHAHI RULE:** No details of the Kutb Shahi rule in Kalinga are forthcoming. The Kutb Shahis appear to have divided their territory into a number of *circars*, a name which continued to be adopted even afterwards. The present Visakhapatnam and Ganjam Districts were clubbed together to form the Chicacole *circar*. The control of this *circar* was placed under a Muslim officer who ruled the country through local chiefs. The conditions in the region were such that they gave ample scope for the growth of new leaders. And it was under the Kutb Shahis that the Pusapati family and the English settlement at Visakhapatnam began to grow.

<sup>112</sup> A.R.E. 1910 ii, para 64.

<sup>113</sup> S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 1312.

<sup>114</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1184.

THE PUSAPATI FAMILY: The traditional account of the Pusapati family preserved in the records collected by Mackenzie credits one Madhavavarma as the founder of the line at Bezwada.<sup>115</sup> His dynasty continued at Bezwada till the reign of the ruler Basavaraja, the fourth king of the line. In the reign of this ruler an invasion on their native home and consequent emigration to Kalinga took place. By the nature of the events, we can assign the date of A.D. 1530 to Basavaraja's emigration, as we know for certain that it was during this period the region was conquered by the Golkonda Sultan. Basavaraja slowly carved out a small principality in Kalinga near the Potnuru region. He was followed by Chinna Basavaraja, Pidugu Bhimaraja and Bikka Bhimaraju. This last mentioned Bhimaraja flourished in the last quarter of the 16th century. For, the family chronicle credits him as a conqueror of Bahubalindra, who was driven from the Kalinga region by the forces of the Sultan of Golkonda. Hence we can safely deduce that the Pusapati Bhimaraja co-operated with the Golkonda ruler. This stabilised the position of the Pusapati family and they were acknowledged as vassals of the Sultan in the region. As a vassal to the Sultan, Bhimaraja added neighbouring tracts to his territory.

### *The English Settlement*

The English settlement at Vizagapatam was founded in A. D. 1682. It was indeed a curious circumstance that brought Vizagapatam to the notice of the Directors of the Fort St. George at Madras. An unauthorised trader, one Thomas Bowrey was making for himself a fortune at the port with the name of the East India Company. The Company then decided to found a factory and thus 'hinder and defeat any interloper that shall come there'. Within two years, the factory progressed competing squarely with the Dutch at Bhimlipatam. It obtained freedom of trade in the Kalinga and was granted a *cowle* of

<sup>115</sup> *Local Records* Vol. IV, *Pusapatirajula charitra*. The account of the family given in *Krishna Vijayamu*, a work of 18th century is quite useless for reconstructing the family history. The writer of *Vizianagram Treaty* (Madras 1894) commits himself to this work and fixes the acquisition of the Islamic title '*manne sultan*' by the Vizianagram family between A. D. 1446-1523 (p. 32). This is a hopeless anachronism since the Muslim rule over the area started at a much later date.

Vizagapatam for an annual rent of Rs. 4,500/- from the Muslim chief of the Chicacole circar. By 1685, the Company had the right to collect dues in Vizagapatam town. A new phase of development of the town began under Company's rule.<sup>116</sup>

### *The Moghul Rule*

The Kutb Shahi rule in Andhra was replaced by the Moghul rule in the year 1687 A. D. when the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb conquered Golkonda and brought it under his domain.<sup>117</sup> He placed the administration of the Andhra country under an officer called the Subedar of Deccan. This Subedar of the Deccan, who was later to be known as the Nizam of Hyderabad, placed a *foujdar* in charge of various *circars*. The *foujdar* carried on the civil administration with the help of 'chiefs' as was obtaining before. By this time the 'chiefs' of various localities came to be known as *Zamindars*. In the Chicacole *circar*, the Pusapati family extended its influence by the lease of some additional *taluks* from the Moghul *foujdar*. Initial ruptures with Moghuls notwithstanding, the English settlement made considerable progress. By the Imperial *farmans* of the Moghul court in 1690 and 1692, the English were permitted to raise a fortification and to keep a limited garrison.<sup>118</sup>

### *Asafjah rule and the French*

The year 1724 A. D. saw the beginning of the Asafjah rule in Andhra. Asafjah, the Moghul *subedar* at Hyderabad, declared himself independent of the imperial authority of Delhi and began to rule in his own right. The death of Asafjah in A. D. 1748 gave rise to a war of succession among his sons, and this brought the English and the French into the scene. The French proved themselves to be more energetic in dealing with these affairs of dynastic struggle. M. Bussy, the French General, raised his protege, Salabat Jung, the third son of Asafjah, to

<sup>116</sup> The account of the foundation and the rise of the settlement is based on the details furnished in *District Gazetteer, Vizagapatam*. See 56 ff. See, also Carmichael, *District Manual, Vizagapatam*.

<sup>117</sup> The Moghul rule in Andhradesa is indicated by a number of inscriptions. See S.I.I. Vol. X.

<sup>118</sup> *District Gazetteer, Vizagapatam*, p. 36.



the post of *subedar* in A. D. 1750. This *subedar* could easily be prevailed upon by the French to cede to them the Machilipatnam, Ellore, Rajahmundry and Chicacole *circars* in 1753. Thus the French began to rule over the Chicacole *circar*.

THE GROWTH OF PUSAPATI FAMILY: Before tracing the political events after the cession of *circars* by the Asafjah to the French, we have to review the growth of power of the Pusapati family in the times of Anandaraju and Vijayaramaraju. The actual establishment of the power of the Pusapatis must be placed in the life-time of Anandaraju who flourished in the last quarter of the 17th century. He subdued all the rebellious landlords of the *circars* and became the Lord of the agency tracts of Vizagapatam District (*manne sultan*). His scheme of expansion was continued by his son Vijayaramaraju (A. D. 1713-57). Vijayaramaraju brought the entire territory of the present Chintapalli taluk of the Visakhapatnam District under his control. He came into direct contact with the *subedar* of Hyderabad and freed himself from the domination of the *foujdar*. He thus became a virtual ruler of the *manneyas*. His only obligation to the *subedar* lay in paying his annual tribute and presents in time. After receiving appropriate favours from the *subedar*, Vijayaramaraju laid foundation to the Vizianagaram Fort in 1713. The *raja* increased his military strength. In addition to the infantry and cavalry, the *raja* engaged mercenary force trained in artillery. Thus by the year 1750, the Pusapati family became a force to be reckoned with in the *circars*.

### *The 50's of 18th Century*

The decade starting A. D. 1750, was an eventful one in the history of the District. In 1753, the French General sent an officer to march to the *circars* and assert his authority. Jafer Ali Khan, the Muslim *foujdar*, was however reluctant to leave his post and hand over the authority to the French. He banked on the Vizianagaram chief to co-operate with him against the French Officer, but the chief went over to the latter's camp. Greatly chagrined and powerless to take any strong action against the *raja*, he appealed to the Marathas for help. The Marathas were not interested in the power politics: they



plundered the territories of the Pusapatis and retired homewards. Jafer Ali Khan was again a deserted man and had to submit to the French General. All this occurred in the year A. D. 1753. In the next year, M. Bussy took the affairs of the *circars* into his own hands and appointed one Ibrahim Khan as the *foujdar* of the Chicacole *circar*. But two years later, a serious rupture broke out between Bussy and the subedar of Deccan. The Muslim *foujdar* now defied the French, taking his stand with the *subedar*. Bussy was then put to the necessity of the reconquest of the *circar*. It was at this juncture that Vijayaramaraju offered his help to the French, helped Bussy to occupy the *circar* once again and dragged Bussy into a war with the chief of Bobbili, his arch-enemy. This war, the war of Bobbili, whose memory is alive in the District even now, was a tragic one. Vijayaramaraju could fulfil his ambition only at the cost of his own life. Though the French became the masters of the *circar* in 1757, soon they were to lose again. Pusapati Anandaraja who succeeded to Vizianagaram *Zamindari* felt dissatisfied with the arrangements made by M. Bussy on the death of his predecessor, and waited for an opportunity to take revenge. When in 1758 Bussy was dragged to Carnatic, he openly aligned himself with the English at Vizagapatam and invited the English to drive out the French. The expedition of Forde was successful in ejecting the French out of the *circars*. Salabat, the subedar of Deccan, pleased with the enterprise of the English, entered into a treaty with them and issued a decree prohibiting the French to settle in the *circars* in future.

**THE SUCCESS OF THE ENGLISH:** In the year A. D. 1765, the English obtained from the Moghul Emperor, the source of all power in Hindustan, a *farman* granting the Five Northern *circars* as free gift. But before they could assert their authority, they had to encounter the ill-will of the *subedar* of Deccan who regarded the territories as his own and resented their cession to the English by the Emperor. The company could, however, enter into a peace treaty with the *subedar* whereby they agreed to pay an annual tribute to the *subedar*. In 1769, the company elevated Visakhapatnam from the position of an isolated factory to that of a district headquarters. The English company's rule began in the District when Mr. John Andrews assumed the charge of chief-in-council.

The English began to take control of the *circars* slowly and systematically. In the Chicacole *circar*, the power of the Pusapatis came in the way of controlling the district. Within twelve years after the expulsion of the French, the Pusapatis expanded so much that they controlled the entire District. This expansion was mainly the work of Sitaramaraju. It must be remembered that he was only a *de facto* ruler. The actual ruler was his brother China Vijayaramaraju who was chosen to the estate after the death of Anandaraja in 1758. Taking advantage of the tender age of his brother, Sitaramaraju took into his hands the administration of the estate. He defied the authority of the company when it demanded the disbandment of the troops that the Rajah maintained. The Estate fell into arrears in the payment of *peshkush* to the company. Sitaramaraju was eventually removed from the office and China Vijayaramaraju assumed full charge of the administration in 1784. But even then the conditions of the Estate did not improve. The company then sequestrated the Estate in 1793 and this resulted in an open rupture between the *raja* and the company. A battle was fought between the company's troops and those of *raja* at Padmanabham (A. D. 1794) in which China Vijayaramaraju lost his life. With the news of the defeat and the death of the *raja*, the other lesser *zamindars* of the District feared that the English would wipe them all out in due time and rose in rebellion. The company adopted a cautious policy of conciliation. They resorted Narayana Babu, son of late *raja*, to his patrimony and made a proclamation to these chiefs that the company would guarantee their possessions as long as they paid the *peshkush* and did not exercise the political control by maintaining troops. With these and other means, the English administration settled down in the district.

It may be noted in conclusion that though the English extended their civil and military power over the Visakhapatnam District during the course of the 19th century, the Simhachalam hill and the Kailasa forest reserve remained as part of the estate of Vizianagaram *zamindars* during the last two centuries. Only recently in A. D. 1949, the temple attained the status of an independent statutory body and the hill and the forest reserve came under the administration of the temple.

# The Temple

Seen from a distance, the Simhachalam Temple presents no grand spectacle. Though a proverb current in the Telugu country credits the Simhachalam temple for its beauty, age has withered its charms.<sup>1</sup> The towering spires of the frontal porch and the central shrine have been renovated (Fig. 5). The small apex of the assembly-hall, the frontal gateway and the enclosure walls are all plastered with lime. The result of all this is that the temple gives a drab spectacle. The enclosure walls with a socle of enormous height on the western and northern sides give the temple the appearance of a fort from outside.

**WEST-FACING TEMPLE:** The temple faces west and in this, it deviates from the general practice (Fig. 3) of constructing temples so as to face east. A story current in popular tradition mentions that the temple was originally facing east and it was made to face west as a result of the dispute between the master-craftsman who constructed the temple and his son.<sup>2</sup> But there is nothing in the scriptures forbidding the construction of a temple with an entrance to the west. On the contrary, the texts state that if the east-facing entrance brings prosperity, the west-facing one gives victory.<sup>3</sup> Another practical consideration which must have moved the builders in this regard is the direction of the flow of the principal spring, namely, the Gangadhara. It flows from east to west, and, given the scriptural sanction, it is natural that the temple should face west.

**THE FRONT GATEWAY:** The temple is enclosed within a high wall (10') with big gates on the western and northern sides. In the east, the enclosure wall butts against the vertical face of the hill. The gates on the two sides have small monumental gateways. The main gateway on the western side is popularly

<sup>1</sup> *Kudurunaku Srikurmamu, Chilugunaku Simhachalamu.*

<sup>2</sup> See infra Chapter IV.

<sup>3</sup> See *Purushottama Samhita*, 4; verse 42; and see *Vishnu Samhita* 6, 63.

known as *gali gopuram* (Fig. 6). As the temple stands on a terrace of the hill, the main entrance has to be approached by a flight of thirty steps.

**INTERNAL STRUCTURES:** Like many Hindu shrines of the medieval period, the actual temple consists of a central shrine, a vestibule, a frontal porch and an assembly-hall which lie in one axis from east to west (Fig. 3). Enclosing the main unit runs a rectangular cloister, and a marriage-hall lies on the north-western corner of the main unit.

**THE ASSEMBLY-HALL:** The assembly-hall which is a big sixteen pillared hall with a dome-like apex, lies at a distance of 34 ft. ahead of the main entrance. Just in the centre between the main entrance and the entrance of the assembly-hall stands the flag-staff (*dhvaja stambha*) about 50 ft. in height (Fig. 6). The assembly-hall which is built on a double plinth has porches on the western, northern and southern sides. Inscriptions are incised on the outer as well as inner wall of the assembly-hall but many of them are obscured by the thick coat of plaster. Inside the hall, two icons in a seated position, Sankanidhi and Padmanidhi, are located at the corners. At the top of the lintel on the southern gate of the porch a big image of Anantasayana made of lac is fitted. The Lord is conducted to this hall on festive occasions for special services (*viseshotsava*).

**KAPPA STAMBHAMU:** The Kappastambhamu is a pillar standing in the porch which separates the assembly-hall and the frontal porch (Fig. 14). It is believed that this pillar fulfils the desires of those that embrace it with a devout mind. Particularly its efficacy as the giver of progeny to the childless has been recognised by many. The learned among the priests opine that this pillar must have had its installation ceremony (*pratishta*) on a magical formula called Santanagopala Yantra which gives the pillar its power. The name Kappastambhamu is derived from *kappamu* which means 'tribute' or an offering both in kind and cash. People pay 'tributes' to the pillar in order to get their wishes fulfilled. Thus the pillar is one of the sources of income to the temple.

**THE MAIN STRUCTURES:** The frontal porch as well as the central shrine stand on a rectangular platform (84' × 48'). They divide the platform into two equal halves. They are joined



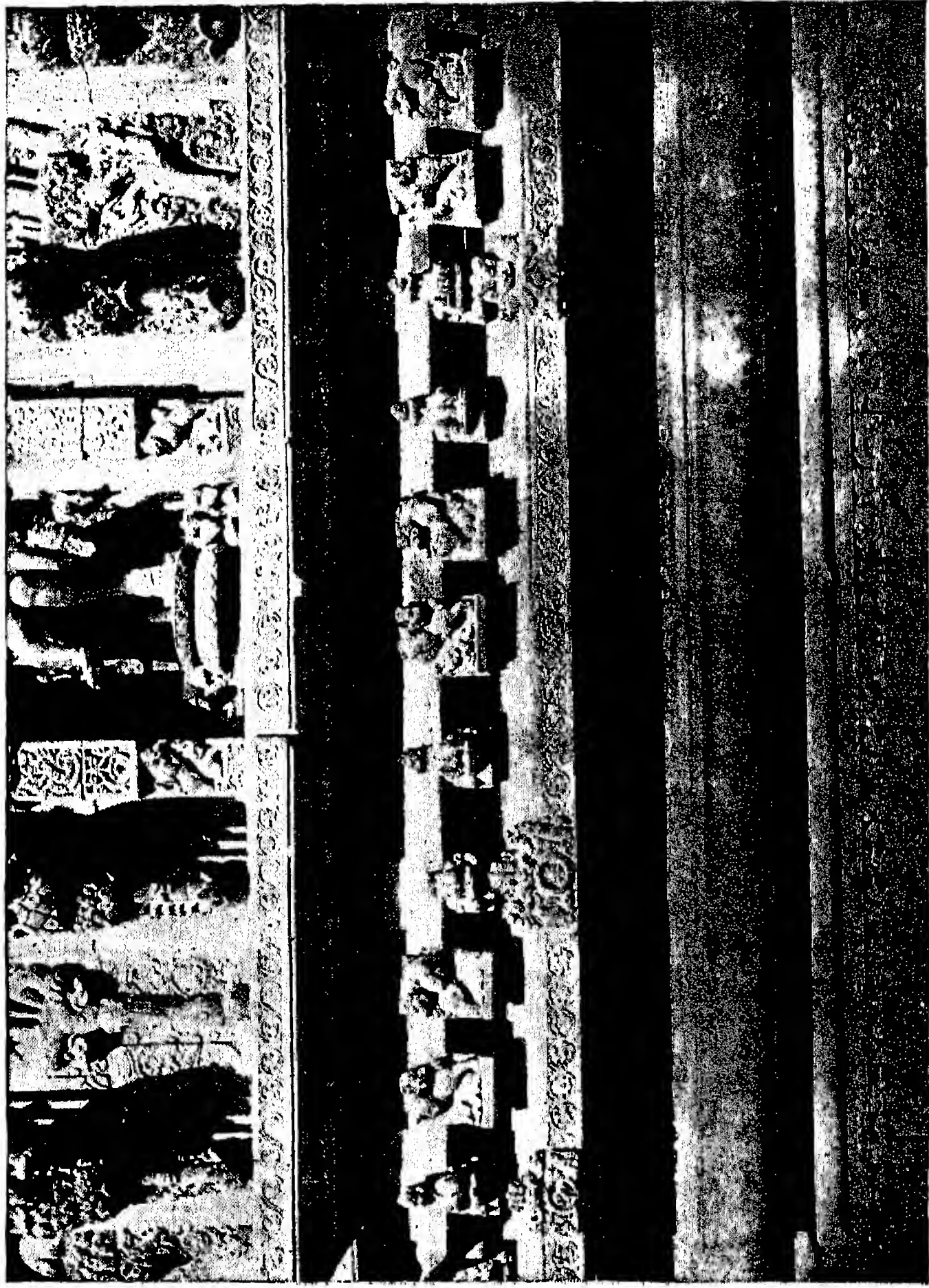


Fig. 9: The Base of the Central Shrine



together by a vestibule of 4 ft. The walls of the central shrine are thicker than those front porch. The inner sides of the walls of both the structures are kept rigorously plain, and this contrasts with the wealth of sculptural ornamentation lavished on the outer sides of the walls of the porch and the central shrine (Figs. 10 to 12).

ICONS OF WORSHIP: To understand the nature of the icons of worship in the temple, one has to know something about icons in general. Icons are of six kinds.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the permanently consecrated icon (*mula bera*) which is the object of all worship, there are five different icons intended for special purposes. They are: the icon used for the sacred bath (*snapan bera*) the icon intended for processional purposes (*utsava bera*) the icon designed for any ordinary festival (*kautuka bera*) the icon specially suitable for conducting the Lord to sleep (*sayana bera*) and the icon intended for the pacification ceremony (*bali bera*). The usual practice, however, is to have all the six icons for the main deity and provide only the permanently consecrated one (*mula bera*) and the processional image (*utsava bera*) for the subsidiary gods and goddesses. The *mula bera* is generally made of stone while the other icons are made of metal.

### The Main Deity

The principal deity – Varaha Narasimha – stands in the ~~centre of the central shrine on a pedestal with a water-chute.~~ The deity is enclosed in a rectangular *mandapa*, called *Prahlada Mandapa*. This porch is made up of a metal upright and cross-bars with a metal dome resembling the apex of the temple. The passage between the *Prahlada Mandapa* and the walls of the central shrine provides a circumambulatory path inside the shrine. The principal icon, namely, Varaha Narasimha, is covered with an unguent of sandal paste and appears in the shape of a big sandalwood linga (Fig. 22). Only on the third day in the month of Vaisakha (March–April), the sandal paste is removed and the real appearance of the Lord is exposed to the devotees (Fig. 21). In this form, he stands in a *tribhangi* posture with only two hands, the head of a boar and the tail of the lion

<sup>4</sup> See *Padma Samhita*, 21 canto.

on a human torso.<sup>5</sup> Flanking the principal icon, on either side are the small standing metal images of Sridevi and Bhudevi, holding the lotuses in their hands.

**THE SNAPANA BERA AND THE SALAGRAMA:** Just by the side of the principal icon, lies the metal of icon Yoga Narasimha, the *snapana bera* of the Lord. He is seated with crossed legs in *utkutikasana*. He holds a conch and a discus in his upper hands, rests the front left hand on the knee, and holds up the left hand in *abhaya mudra*. The *salagramas* of the Lord are kept in a plate near the principal icon. They are black stones (fossil ammonite) of different sizes and are held as sacred as the main deity. The spiral grooves at their bottom are taken to represent the emblems of Vishnu. A garland of one hundred and eight *salagramas* adorns the principal icon. The daily bathing-service is accorded not only to the *snapana bera* but also to the *salagramas*.

**ICONS IN THE FRONTAL PORCH:** The frontal porch has two small rooms on the southern and northern sides which are described as 'Bhoga Mandir' and 'Sayana Mandir' respectively. These are intended for housing the different icons connected with the principal and other deities. On the south-eastern corner of the frontal porch, on a raised platform are stationed the stone images of Alwars.

**OTHER ICONS:** The *utsava*, *kautuka* and *bali beras* of the Lord are housed in the Bhoga Mandir. The *utsava bera* of the Lord is the metal image of Govindaraja, adorned with a golden armour. Govindaraja stands holding a conch and discus in his upper hands. He places the front left hand on club and poises his right hand in *abhayamudra*. *Madana Gopalaswamy*, the *kautuka bera* of the Lord, is a standing metal image with four arms. The upper hands show a conch and a discus and lower hands a *varada* and a *katyayalambita* pose. *Sudarsana Perumal* or *Chakra Perumal* is the *bali bera* of the Lord. *Chakra Perumal* stands with sixteen hands holding different emblems of Vishnu with the circular halo in the background. Besides the *utsava bera* of the Lord, the *utsava beras* Chaturbhuja Tayar, Andal and Lakshminarayana are placed in the Bhogamandir.

<sup>5</sup> See infra, chapter IV.

**SAYANA BERA:** It is usual to find in the *sayana mandir* of the Lord a swing designed for conducting the *sayana bera* of the Lord to sleep. The *sayana bera* of the Lord is the metal image of Venugopalaswamy. He stands in his characteristic *tribhangi* posture playing on a flute, flanked by Rukmini and Satyabhama.

**CLOISTER OF THE TEMPLE:** The rectangular cloister which encloses the central shrine and the frontal porch joins the assembly-hall on the western side (Fig. 4). This cloister is described in the inscriptions as *tiruchuttumala* and is popularly known as *beda mandapa*. The Lord is taken round this cloister on special festive days. On the north-eastern corner of this cloister lies a stone chariot or *ratha* (Fig. 13). This chariot is only in fact a porch which is made to look like a chariot by adding wheels and a horse on either side, and hence it is appropriately described as *Ratha Mandapa*. On the occasion of *Ratha Saptami*, the Lord is conducted to this porch and is worshipped with a special service. The walls of the cloister are the virtual repositories of the main bulk of inscriptions. The roof of this cloister on the western side used to contain modern paintings depicting Lord Krishna's childhood pranks. They have decayed and have been subsequently plastered with lime. Even now one can see two of these paintings on the wall of the southern side.

**ANDAL SHRINE:** A small separate shrine of Andal, one of the twelve saints of the Vaishnavite sect and one whom Lord Ranganadha made his own spouse, lies in the southern side of the main compound. The image of Andal is of stone, decked with garments and ornaments of different kinds like a bride. Andal stands on a pedestal with the right hand held in an *abhaya* posture.

**LAKSHMI SHRINE:** Lakshmi, the consort of the Principal deity known as Chaturbhuja Tayar, is housed in a small room scooped out of the north-western wall of the cloister. It does not look like a shrine. In fact, it was a treasury of the Lord which had been appropriately converted into a shrine of Lakshmi. The image is made of stone and has the canopy of a silver *makara torana*. Chaturbhuja Tayar sits with legs folded in *padmasana* holding lotuses with her upper hands. The lower four hands show the *abhaya* and *varada mudras*. She is adorned with silk garments,

a gold armour and various other ornaments.

**THE TREASURY:** The treasury (*bhandara*) of the Lord, like the Lakshmi Sannidhi described above, lies in a room scooped out of a wall of the cloister on the south-western side. All the ornaments are kept in this treasury. Though inscriptions of the medieval times mention gifts of a number of ornaments to the Simhadrinatha, the raids of the Muslims have resulted in the loss of many valuable ornaments. All the ornaments which the temple now possesses have been acquired in modern times. Most of these gold ornaments of the Lord were melted and handed over to the government recently, when the government sought all the gold hoardings of the country.

**ORNAMENTS OF THE TEMPLE:** The temple has now only a few ornaments. The important among these are only four. (1) Necklace of uncut emeralds: This necklace with green emeralds has in its centre an excellent ruby. Carved inside the ruby is the image of the chariot of Surya. This is generally believed to be the gift of Krishnaraya of Vijayanagara. (2) Tirumani: Studded with diamonds and having a ruby in the centre, this Tirumani is in fact the U-shaped Vaishnava symbol which is seen on the forehead of a devout Vaishnava. (3) Waist-band: Made of gold, this waist-band weighs roughly 100 *tolas*. (4) Crest: This beautiful crest with an emerald in the centre is a gift to the temple by Vijayarama Gajapathi (1848 – 79).

**ALVAR SHRINE:** Alvars, the twelve saints of the Vaishnava sect, are accorded the most honoured place in Vaishnava shrines. In the temple, besides the stone images of Alvars kept near Bhogamandir, a separate shrine of Alvars exists on the southern side of the assembly-hall. In this shrine, the stone images of Alvars and important Acharyas are arranged in a L-shaped row on a raised platform two feet high. The first is the image in a seated position of Vishvaksena, the chamberlain of the Lord. The upper hands hold a conch and a discus. The front right hand is poised in *jnanamudra*, while the other one rests on the lap. The images of Alvars are all figures in a seated position invariably having their hands folded in an *anjali* pose. In the fag end of the row lie the images of Ramanuja, the greatest of the Acharyas, Kurattalwan, a pupil of Ramanuja,

and Manavala Mahamuni, another celebrated figure among the Acharyas. Special services are conducted in the shrine on the birth-days of Alvars.

TEMPLE OFFICES, RAMANUJAKUTAM AND THE KITCHEN : A small unit of offices of the administration is located on the premises of the temple. This unit comprises a store-room and two office-rooms, which encircle the Alvar shrine on the western and southern sides. Beyond the southern enclosure lies the Ramanujakutam which offers shelter to Vaishnava pilgrims. The kitchen room where the *bhogams* of the Lord are prepared is outside the enclosure wall at the south-eastern corner.

VAISAKHA AND JYESTHA MANDAPAS : In the north-western corner of the courtyard are two small porches known as 'Vaisakha' and 'Jyestha' mandapas. They are intended for conducting special festivals.

MARRIAGE-HALL (*Kalyana Mandapa*): The marriage-hall lies on the north-eastern corner of the courtyard (Fig. 7). It is a pillared hall where the wedding of the Lord takes place on the 11th day in the first half of the month of Chaitra every year. One enters the hall through a porch on the south-western side. The pillars of the hall are well-preserved although the sculpture on the sides of the corbels and the panels in the centre of the shaft has been covered with chunam in some instances.

BATHING GHAT (*Tirthavari*) : Gangadhara, the bathing ghat where the Lord is conducted at the conclusion of the Kalyanotsava for the purification bath, lies at a distance of about one furlong north-east of the temple. It is a natural spring whose waters are held to be sacred. It is usual to find the devotees that visit the temple taking a dip in its waters and undergoing the tonsuring ceremony before entering the temple. Just above the spot of the spring an image of Yoga Narasimha in a seated position is installed. To the south of the spring are two *lingas* and an image of Vighnesvara. On the eastern side there is a pillared *mandapa* with a high plinth generally used for performing weddings. Opposite to the *mandapa* there is a big shed meant for tonsuring. A fee is collected for this tonsuring, and the money derived from it is a great source of income to the temple.



TEMPLE TANKS AND GARDENS: There are two temple tanks, one at the foot of the hill and the other in the village down the hill. Both these tanks are fed by the water from the spring on the hill, the water of which is led down by means of pipes. The tank at the foot of the hill is called Swami Pushkarini while the other one situated a little farther is described as Varaha Pushkarini. The Lord is conducted to these tanks for festivals. The temple also has two gardens in the village down the hill, and in these gardens festivals like the Tree Festival (Sami Puja) are celebrated.

THE VEHICLES OF THE LORD: The vehicles (*vahanas*) of the Lord, acquired by the administration during the course of the present century, are kept in a separate room (*vahanasala*) on the north-eastern corner of the courtyard and also in the marriage-hall. The most important of the *vahanas* is the gold plated throne. This is a rectangular pedastal (4' × 3'). At the four corners of the pedastal are placed four uprights. The front two support an arch (*torana*) of the conventional design with the head of a *kirtimukha* in the centre. Second in importance is the Garuda *vahana*. A life-sized image of the kneeling Garuda is installed on a square pedastal (4 ft.). The image of the Garuda carries on its shoulders a small pedastal meant for the image of the Lord.

The gold-coated Tolikkiyan kept in the marriage-hall is a product of the smiths of Madras. The silver-coated Garuda *vahana* and the brass Hanuman *vahana* kept in the *vahanasala* are the work of a goldsmith of Vizianagaram. The rest of the Vahanas—Aswa, Suryachandra, Hamsa, Kurma, Sarvajanamano-ranjani, Nandi and Garuda—are either made of wood or made of lac, and are the products of the craftsmen of Mandasa (Ganjam District, Orissa), a place noted for the manufacture of wooden and lac images.

THE TEMPLE CAR (RATHA): The temple car made of timber is stationed in a room specially built by the side of the entrance to the temple. It does not reveal any high quality of workmanship and like the vehicles of the temple is an acquisition of recent times. Measuring 20 ft. in height, this four-wheeled vehicle resembles the spire of a Dravida Vimana, with four tiers (*talas*) of gradually diminishing sizes. It is also crowned by an apex and a finial.

OTHER SHRINES ON THE HILL: Among the subsidiary shrines the Tripurantaka temple which lies on the way leading to *Gangadhara* occupies a place of importance. Tripurantaka is the protector of the *kshetra*, and his consort is Tripurasundari. The temple houses a *linga* flanked by the metal image of Tripurasundari and also the stone images of gate-keepers and Nandi, the *vehicle* of Lord Siva.

SITARAMASWAMI TEMPLE: The Sitaramaswami Temple lies in the courtyard (60' × 50') near Gangadhara. The Sanctum of the temple contains the images of Rama and of his consort seated on his left lap. The deity has the *utsava vigrahas* of Ashtabhuja Narayana and Lakshmi and the *bali bera* of Sudarsana Perumal. Outside the temple one can see the recently erected pedestal commemorating the event of the festival in honour of Rama (Ramakratuvu).

KASI VISVESWARA SHRINE: Kasi Visveswara swami shrine which lies on the way leading to the temple is in fact a house which is converted into a shrine. The house has one central room and four small rooms in the four corners. In the central room are the images of Kasi Visveswara and his consort, the goddess Annapurna. The corner rooms house one in each of the images of Rama, Vishnu, Ganapati and Lakshmi.

HANUMAN SHRINE: The Hanuman temple as has already been mentioned lies on the way leading to the temple. The pilgrim touches the Hanuman gate after traversing 650 steps. By the southern side of this gate lies the small Hanuman shrine with a big stone image of Hanuman occupying the entire shrine. Anjaneya is considered to be the chamberlain of the Lord and worshipped according to the Madhvasampradaya, or the ritualistic traditions of the Madhvas.

The account of the temple will not be complete unless mention is made of two structures on the hill which are situated on the northern side of the valley. One of this is the dilapidated Vishnu Shrine that stands on an elevated place known as Vaikunthavasuni Metta. The temple is completely dilapidated, but one can still observe mutilated statues of Vishnu seated with his consorts. Another place cherished in popular esteem is the one which is supposed to have contained the *Jayastambha* of Krishnaraya of Vijayanagar. This lies on the western edge of the cliff.

# The Temple in Mythology, Legend and Literature

## SECTION I: MYTHOLOGY

The Simhachalam Temple, like many other shrines of South India, has a *sthalamahatmya* (also known as *sthalapurana*) of its own which gives a mythological origin to the temple.<sup>1</sup> The temple has also been, like other temples of the land, a centre around which legends are afloat and songs have been sung. The current tradition in and around Simhachalam recounts these stories, and many literary compositions in Telugu record the glories of Simhadrinatha.

### *The Sthalapuranam*

The *sthalapurana* is divided into thirty-two chapters. The number is obviously chosen to glorify the 32 manifestations of the Lord Narasimha which the *purana* mentions. The first four chapters describe the greatness of Lord *Nrihari* on the Simhachala, of the mountain and of its main spring, the Gangadhara. We are told that Simhachala is one among the four important shrines dedicated to Narasimha. These four are: Ahobilam, Kritasaucham, Harapapam and Simhachalam.<sup>2</sup> Of these places, Simhachala is the most beautiful spot. Lord Vishnu descended on this mountain to save Prahlada, his devotee, who was about to fall from the mountain precipice. The *purana* recounts the mythological story of the incarnation of the Lord in the Kritayuga, the assumption of this peculiar incarnation

<sup>1</sup> A few printed copies of the *sthalapurana* are available in the Devasthanam Library at Simhachalam. Two *sthalapuranas*, one in manuscript form and another written on palm-leaves are available in the Oriental Library at Vizianagaram. There is no difference of version in these three forms.

<sup>2</sup> Of these four places, Kritasaucham and Harapapam cannot be identified. Ahobilam is located in the Nandyal Taluk of Kurnool District.



Fig. 10: The Outer Wall of the Central Shrine



in the chapters from 5th to 29th and the revival of the worship of the Lord in another life-cycle by King Pururava in the concluding chapters.

### *The Story of the Origin*

The story of the origin of Simhadrinatha runs thus—Jaya and Vijaya, the gatekeepers of the celestial abode of Lord Vishnu, were cursed to be born as demons by the Lord for the disrespect they showed to some visiting sages. They were born as Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyaksha to the sage Kasyapa, and grew into mighty demon lords bent upon disturbing the peace of the world. The younger of the two, Hiranyaksha, seized the earth and carried it to nether regions. Lord Vishnu delivered the earth from the clutches of the Demon by assuming the Boar Incarnation (*Varaha Avatara*). Aggrieved by the death of his brother, Hiranyakasipu wanted to avenge the death of his brother. He added to his might the power of penance and began to punish the gods and sages, the devotees of Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu was once again prevailed upon to rescue the world from the menace of this demon. Then the Lord made one of his servants, Sumukha, to be born as a son of Hiranyakasipu. This son of Hiranyakasipu, named Prahlada, became a devotee of Vishnu even from his birth and thus brought upon himself the wrath of his father. Hiranyakasipu tried to mend the ways of his erring son; but when he found him to be adamant, made him undergo severe hardships. He made the elephants trample over him and set poisonous snakes against him. Prahlada, protected as he was by divine grace, stood firm. Hiranyakasipu, as a last resort, asked his servants to throw his son into the sea and place a huge mountain over him. His servants chose to drop Prahlada in the sea near the mount Simhadri with a view to place the mountain over him. But before they could complete their act, Lord Narayana rescued him by jumping over the hill and lifting up Prahlada from the sea. Simhadri is thus the place where the Lord rescued Prahlada. The form of Varaha Narasimha was assumed by him then at the prayer of his devotee, Prahlada, who wanted to see both the aspects of the Lord, the one by which he had already killed Hiranyaksha and the other by which he would kill Hiranyakasipu.

PRAHLADA AND PURURAVA: According to the *sthalapurana*,



Prahlada was the first person to construct a temple round the Deity. He accomplished this after his father's death at the hands of Narasimha. But at the end of that life-cycle (*krita yuga*), the temple was neglected and began to decay. Even the Deity was not taken care of and crests of earth slowly gathered round the image. But, at the beginning of another life-cycle, the Lord once again was discovered by Pururava of the Lunar Dynasty. Pururava, with his spouse Urvasi, riding on an aerial chariot over the hills of the South, was drawn to the Simhachala by a mysterious power. He discovered the Lord on the hill lying imbedded in crests of earth. He cleared the earth around the image of the Lord. Then he was addressed by the *akasvani* not to expose the image but cover it with sandal paste. It also added that the Lord should be worshipped in this form, and only once in a year, on the third day in the month of Vaisakha his *nijaswarupa* can be revealed. Acting under the instructions of *akasvani* the king applied over the image an amount of sandalwood paste which is equal to the earth he had removed, worshipped the deity and built the temple once again around the image. The temple continued to flourish ever since.

### *Historicity of the Sthala Purana*

The story of Prahlada can be found both in the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Bhagavata*. Like all the *sthala puranas* dealing with the Prahlada story, the *sthala purana* of the Simhachalam Temple draws from these classical *puranas*. The following points not found in the *Vishnu Purana* may be noted :

1. Jaya and Vijaya, the door-keepers of Vishnu, were born as Demons because of a curse.
2. Sumukha, the door-keeper of the abode of Vishnu was cursed by Brahma and others when he obstructed their entry. The curse was that he would be born in the house of Demons. Sumukha was born as Prahlada.
3. Prahlada solicited the Lord that he should appear in the form of Varaha Narasimha, and Lord Vishnu assured Prahlada that he would kill Hiranyakasipu and appear at Simhachala as Varaha Narasimha.
4. The story of King Pururava.

The *sthala purana* of Simhachala is one of the many *sthala puranas*, written in honour of various shrines found in the country. For assessing the chronological setting of these *sthala puranas*, we are singularly fortunate in having a critical study of the *sthala puranas* of the Telugu country, a thesis written by Dr. V. G. Krishnamacharyulu.<sup>3</sup> He rightly observes that most of the *sthala puranas* of the Telugu country were composed after the attempted establishment of Islam in Andhra during the 14th century. The Islam offered a threat to the religious life of the Hindus, and a number of efforts were made for rivetting the Brahminical religion into the minds of the people. The composition of the *sthala puranas* was one such effort.<sup>4</sup> It is thus usual to find in all the *sthala puranas* a vivid description of the *kshetra* and the sanctity of its waters. It is also possible to discover a certain basic pattern in all the usual *sthala puranas* of the Andhra country. Dr. Krishnamacharyulu points out that the writers of the *sthala puranas*, written in honour of the shrines dedicated to Narasimha tried to associate the stories written long ago in the *puranas* to places they were writing about. Thus the well-known Narasimha *purana* written to glorify the Lord of Ahobala Kshetra by Yerra Preggada connects the story of Narasimha found in Vishnu Purana with Ahobala.<sup>5</sup> Ahobala is stated to be the place where Lord Vishnu rested after killing Hiranyakasipu. In a similar fashion, the *sthala-mahatmya* describes Simhachala as the spot where Lord Vishnu descended to rescue Prahlada. Thus the very nature and purpose for which the *sthala puranas* were written preclude them from giving any historical information.

Though the *sthala purana* depicts the temple from the mythological view-point, it cannot be brushed aside as utterly useless from the historical stand point. For, an inscription from the temple of the 13th century makes a reference to the story of king Pururava contained in the *sthalamahatmya*. The purpose of the inscription is to record that Vira Sri Narasimha Deva (Narasimha I) arranged for the stay of 100 Sanis in the

<sup>3</sup> '*Sthala Puranas in Telugu and an Inquiry into their Nature* - Doctoral Thesis in Telugu (unpublished), available at the Andhra University Library.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 69.

temple for singing in the presence of the Lord and to catalogue the names of 100 Sanis.<sup>6</sup> The inscription compares this act of munificence to similar gifts made by Pururava in the past.<sup>7</sup>

Thus the inscription shows that even in the 13th century the tradition that king Pururava revived the glory of the temple was cherished. Though we cannot on this account push the antiquity of the temple to the days of Pururava of the Puranas, yet we can say that in the 13th century the temple was cherished as possessing a hoary antiquity.

The *sthala purana*, just as it records the legend of Pururava, mentions the 32 forms of Narasimha. Some of these forms can be found on the pilasters of the particular cloister built in the 13th century. It will be shown later that the craftsmen worked these forms basing on the *dhyana slokas* current at Simhachalam in those times.<sup>8</sup> The *sthala purana* utilises the forms of Narasimha given in the *dhyana slokas* to narrate the story of the fight between Narasimha and Hiranyakasipu. We are told that Narasimha assumed these different forms in order to kill Hiranyakasipu who tried to elude the grip of Narasimha by assuming different shapes. Thus even in this respect the *sthala purana* borrows from a tradition which was current in the 13th century.

### The Date

Though the *sthala purana* utilises the traditions which were current in the 13th century, it can be demonstrated that it was a much later composition. The *purana* claims that it was a part of the *Skanda Purana* which may be considered as the earliest text belonging to this class of literature.<sup>9</sup> But it is not to be found in the *Skanda Purana*, even though the *sthala puranas* of other Vishnu shrines like Puri and Tirupati are included in the *Skanda Purana*. The *kshetra* itself is not specifically mentioned in any of the ancient puranas and

<sup>6</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1197.

<sup>7</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1197.

<sup>8</sup> *Infra*, chapter X.

<sup>9</sup> Pargiter in his work on Ancient Indian Historical Tradition shows that *Skanda Purana* existed before 7th century. See Ancient *Indian Historical Tradition*, p. 49.

samhitas.<sup>10</sup> The *sthala purana* is not referred to in any one of the literary works of the medieval period. On the other hand, literary compositions based on the *sthala mahatmya* appear only in the 17th and 18th centuries. All this suggests a date much later than the 13th century. There is reason to believe that it was composed in the early part of the 17th century. An inscription of S. 1526 (A.D. 1604) mentions that the religious life of the temple was revived after a period of inactivity for 40 years. The temple experienced a setback after a continuous period of prosperity extending over several centuries, and its fortunes had to be resuscitated. In these circumstances, it would be quite appropriate if a *sthala purana* were to be written to kindle popular interest by propagating the hoary sanctity of the place.

## SECTION II : THE LEGENDS

### *The Visit of Ramanuja*

The most important of the traditional stories current around the temple is the visit of Ramanuja to the temple. He visited the temple after his victorious debate at Puri, and stay at Srikurmam. Ramanuja found the Simhachala *Kshetra*, a centre of Saivism. He engaged the *pandits* there in a discussion, and, defeating them in a debate, took personal possession of the temple and converted it into a Vaishnavite shrine.

Another account of the conversion of the temple by Ramanuja runs thus. Ramanuja, according to this version, made a direct challenge to the priests of the *Kshetra* saying that he would show them the greatness of Vishnu worship. He asked them to keep the *Vibhuti* and the *Tulasi*, the two objects which are dear to Siva and Vishnu, respectively, and see which of them would remain at the altar by the next morning. The priests agreed to this and did likewise. At night, Ramanuja, because he happened to be incarnation of Adishesha, could easily assume the shape of a snake, effect an entry into the central shrine and keep the *Tulasi* only at the altar. The next morning the priests discovered the

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<sup>10</sup> See Kane, *History of Dharmasastra*, Vol. IV, p. 730.

*Tulasi* at the altar, were convinced of the superiority of Hari, and agreed to convert the shrine into a Vishnu shrine. The sculptors were ordered to make the image of Varaha Narasimha out of the big *linga*. But before they could finish it, the icon began to bleed. Ramanuja then ordered that the icon should be covered with sandalwood paste.

There is another version of this particular part of the story. According to this, Ramanuja chose a particular auspicious moment for the consecration of the image, but the craftsmen could not finish it by that time. So he installed the unfinished image, lest the great auspicious moment should pass. The sandalwood paste was then applied to cover the angularities of the icon.

This story of Ramanuja's work of converting a Saiva shrine into a Vaishnava shrine is not peculiar to Simhachala alone. The same story is current around the Vishnu shrines at Srikurmam and Tirupati. Thus, in popular esteem, Ramanuja was responsible for converting quite a few Saiva shrines of Andhra into Vaishnava shrines. Does this tradition contain an element of truth? For examining this tradition, it is necessary to have an idea of Ramanuja's life and work.

According to all traditional Vaishnavite works, Ramanuja was born at Sri Perumbudur in S. 939 (A.D. 1017) and died at Srirangam in S. 1059 (A.D. 1137), living a full span of 120 years.<sup>11</sup> Mastering all the traditional lore at an early age, he migrated to Kanchi where he tried to further his knowledge at the feet of Yadava Prakasa, the famous teacher of the time. Though he studied under Yadava Prakasa, differences arose between the teacher and the disciple concerning the interpretation of certain philosophical propositions. Yadava was a believer in the Advaitic philosophy of Sankara, while Ramanuja tried to propound his own new system of Visishtadvaita. Ramanuja soon discovered that his place was not at Kanchi but was at Srirangam. For, the doctrine of Visishtadvaita philosophy had been progressing in the hands of Acharyas of

<sup>11</sup> The *Guruparamparai* mentioned that Ramanuja was born in S. 939 (A.D. 1017); *Sakavarshamu tollayirattu muppattonbadu*.



Srirangam, Ramanuja's contemporary being Yamunacharya. After the sudden demise of Yamunacharya, Ramanuja was invited to Srirangam to continue the work of Yamunacharya. Ramanuja succeeded to the pontifical seat at Srirangam and devoted himself to writing. In his three works—the Vedanta Sangraha, a treatise on the *Gita*, and his famous *Sribhashya*—he gave an authoritative exposition of the doctrine of *Visishtadvaita*. His greatness lay in systematising the vast religious and philosophical doctrines of Vishnu worship, namely, the writings of Alvars, Acharyas and Panchratrins.

After establishing his reputation and gathering a number of followers, Ramanuja travelled throughout the country propagating the new faith. If tradition is to be believed, he was persecuted by a Chola king, identified with Kulottunga (A. D. 1070–1120) of the Chola dynasty.<sup>12</sup> He left the Dravida country, sought refuge in the Hoyasala dominions, and converted its ruler Bittiga Deva (A. D. 1108–42), a follower of Jainism, into Vaishnavism.<sup>13</sup> He finally returned to Srirangam and died at the place. To these details of life as given in the traditional works—*Guruparampara Prabavam*, *Divyasuricharitra* and *Prapannamrta*—have been added a number of minor incidents and stories in popular legend. One such story is that of converting a number of Saiva shrines into Vaishnava shrines.

Prof. S. K. Iyengar in his *History of Tirupati* verified the story gathered around the shrine of Tirupati and found it incorrect. He accepts the traditional date assigned to Ramanuja, i. e., from A. D. 1017 to 1137 and regards that he was a contemporary of Kulottunga I (A. D. 1070 to 1118) of the Chola

<sup>12</sup> This identification, however, has been a subject of great controversy and cannot be conclusively established. The Sanskrit work *Divyasuricharitra* mentions that Ramanuja and his followers were persecuted by Krmikantha Chola (See *Divyasuricharitra*, 18th canto). Some scholars have identified him with Kulottunga I while others with Kulottunga II (See Prof K. A. N. Sastri, *The Cholas*, p. 300). N. Krishna Iyengar in a lengthy article on *Ramanuja, a study of his life and philosophy*, argues that the first ruler of the Chola dynasty to persecute Vaishnava sect was Kulottunga I (A. D. 1070–1120) and that this persecution was renewed by Kulottunga II (A. D. 1133–1150). See, *Review of Philosophy and Religion*, 1940.

<sup>13</sup> See J. D. M. Derret, *The Hoyasalas*, p. 46. He fixes the reign of Bittiga Deva between A. D. 1108 and 1142; for contra, see K. A. N. Sastri, *History of South India*, p. 215.

dynasty. Tirupati flourished as a Vaishnava shrine even before the time in which Ramanuja flourished. It was celebrated by Alvars and its existence since 8th century has been documented by epigraphy. It was only in the 11th century that its character was questioned by the Saiva protagonists who became politically dominant in the region around Tirupati. Ramanuja visited Tirupati, successfully combated the attack of the Saivites, established that the shrine was a Vaishnavite shrine, and thus revived its glory.<sup>14</sup>

Prof. Iyengar could thus successfully explain the popular tradition centered round the shrine of Tirupati. But the same line of argument cannot be applied to the Simhachala *Kshetra*. Simhachalam is not mentioned in any literary work earlier than the 14th century. The earliest reference to the temple can be found only in the inscriptions coming from the temple itself, and in all these inscriptions, the temple figures as a Vaishnava shrine.<sup>15</sup>

A careful examination of the three sources that deal with the life of Ramanuja—the *Guruparamparai*, *Divyasuricharitra* and *Prapannamrta*—shows how as time passed on there was some fabrication concerning each incident connected with Ramanuja's life.<sup>16</sup> The *Guruparamparai* written in Tamil by Pingala Jiyar states that Ramanuja visited the holy places like Varanasi, Puri, Srikurmam, Simhadri and Ahobala, held disputations with the preachers of other sects at some places and gained victory over them.<sup>17</sup> The *Divyasuricharitra*, a later Sanskrit work written in *kavya* style, introduces a novelty while describing Ramanuja's visit to Srikurmam. It mentions that Ramanuja revealed the real identity of the Lord of Kshetra at Srikurma (*Srikurmam*

<sup>14</sup> See S. K. Iyengar, *History of Tirupati*, Vol. II, chapter XIII, Vol. I, VII to XII.

<sup>15</sup> By the date of the earliest inscription S. 1009 (A. D. 1087) from the temple, the temple was a Vishnu shrine.

<sup>16</sup> Of these three works, the *Guruparamparai* appears to be the earliest. B. V. Ramanujam in his paper on *Divyasuricharitra* discusses at length the comparative antiquity of *Guruparamparai* and *Divyasuri charitra* and concludes that the former was written in the 13th and the latter in the 16th century (See *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XV).

<sup>17</sup> Avvidattil anyasamayangal and tarkittu jayittu, *Guruparamparai* p. 319.



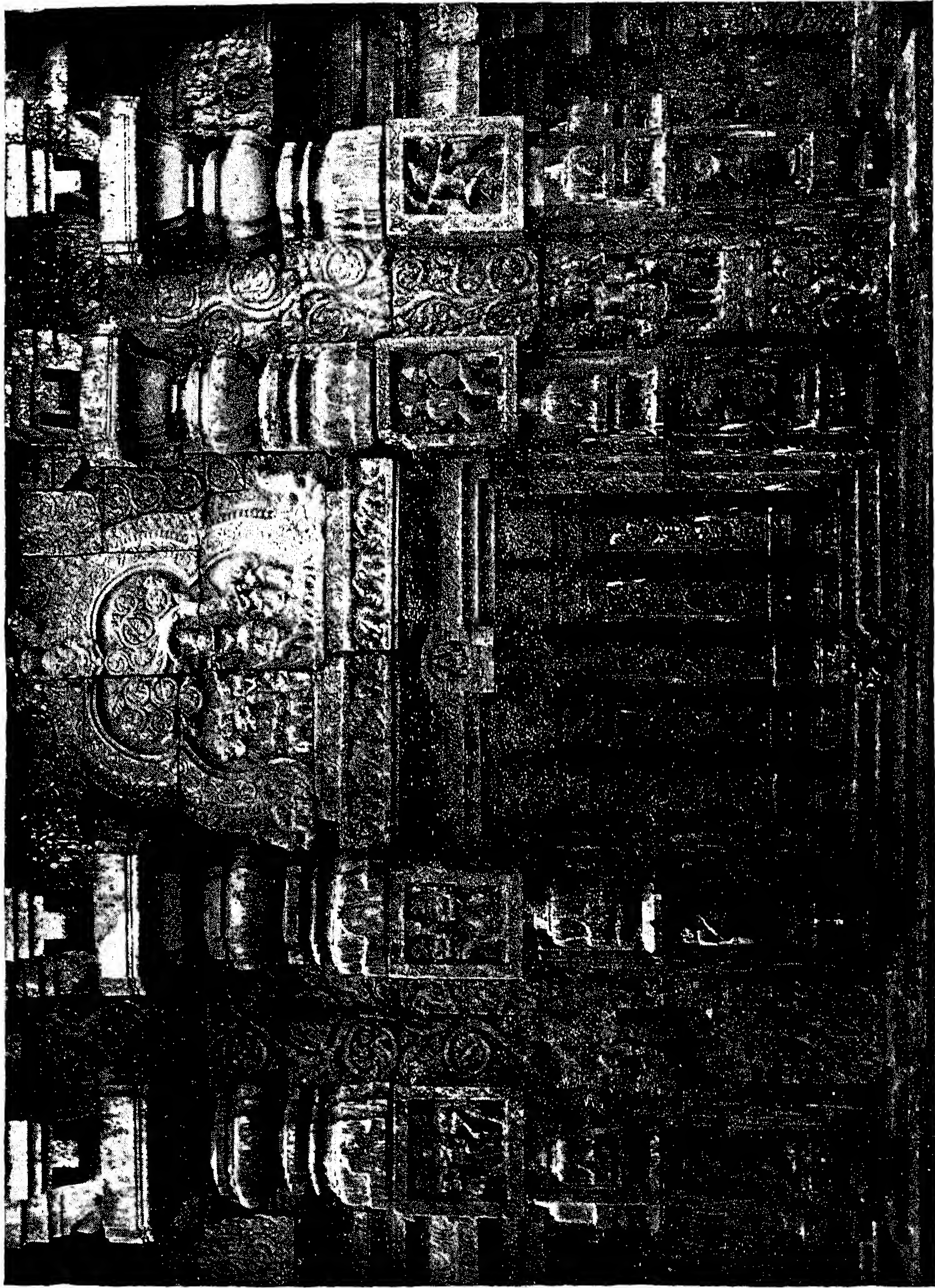


Fig. 11 : The Wall of the Frontal Porch with perforated window

*Prakatayisma Lakshmanaryah*).<sup>18</sup> *Prapannamrta*, a 16th century work, alludes further to another incident. According to this work Ramanuja resolved the dispute that raged about the character of the presiding Deity of the Tirumala Hill in favour of the Vaishnavas.<sup>19</sup> Thus each incident connected with his life gained further fabrication in course of time and finally turned out to be stories which alleged that Ramanuja converted some of the Saiva shrines into Vaishnava shrines.

It is a matter of common knowledge that Ramanuja during the active life from A. D. 1050–1130 propagated Vaishnavism with a missionary zeal. The twin phases of the Vaishnavite movement in the south, the *bhakti* movement of the Alvars and the ritualistic worship of the Pancharatrins, reached their apogee by the work of Ramanuja. He brought the Vishnu worship to its logical culmination by propounding the doctrine of *prapatti*, at the same time upholding ritualistic worship of the Pancharatra Agamas. His lifelong work not only added a new status to the existing Vaishnava shrines but also prepared the way for the emergence of new Vishnu shrines. Stories alleging that Ramanuja converted some of the Saiva shrines into Vaishnava shrines appear to have originated from the stupendous missionary activity carried on by Ramanuja during the active phase of his life. Thus, as observed by J. D. M. Derret, it is quite possible that the Hoyasala ruler Bittigadeva might have taken to Vaishnavism by the influence of Ramanuja ; but the story that he was responsible for desecrating Jaina shrines and erecting Vaishnava shrines in their place is a later concoction.<sup>20</sup>

### *Ramanuja and Kanta Krishnamacharya*

Another of the legends deals with a *bhakta* of Simhadri-natha by name Kānta Krishnamacharya. He was a great *bhakta*, and as he sang his songs the Lord danced to his tune. Ramanuja visited the temple and stayed at the place doing penance. Krishnamacharya never cared for Ramanuja, and felt superior to him as he could invoke the Lord with his songs. Ramanuja

<sup>18</sup> See *Divyasuricharitra*, 18th canto.

<sup>19</sup> *Prapannamrta*, 36th canto.

<sup>20</sup> See J. D. M. Derret, loc. cit., p. 222.

wanted to teach him a lesson. He requested Krishnamacharya to convey to the Lord news of his presence, and ask him if he could attain salvation. When the priest conveyed this to the Lord, the Lord wondered how Ramanuja could be deprived of salvation when he had the capacity to grant salvation to others. Krishnamacharya thereupon asked the Lord if he would favour him with the same. The Lord then replied that Ramanuja alone could give salvation to him. Hearing this reply, Krishnamacharya became angry. He had served the Lord all through his life with his songs and now this Lord asked him to seek salvation elsewhere. So he began to abuse the Lord. The Lord replied that he did not owe him anything. If Krishnamacharya pleased him with his songs, he repaid him with his dancing. Now, for this outburst of his, Krishnamacharya needed punishment, and hence Simhadrinatha cursed Krishnamacharya saying that his songs would be forgotten by the posterity. Then, Kanta Krishnamacharya cursed back the Lord saying that his temple would be in flames for seven days and get destroyed. The Muslim invasion that took place in the 18th century is believed to have occurred because of the curse of Kanta Krishnamacharya, and the temple is believed to have been put to flames by the Muslims.

Krishnamacharya referred to in the story is generally identified with a poet who flourished in the medieval times at Simhachala, and composed not only songs in praise of Simhadrinatha but many other works. On the basis of the literary works like *Pratapacharitra* and *Ekasilanagaracharitra*, he is believed to have been a contemporary of Prataparudra (A. D. 1290–1323), the last ruler of the Kakatiya dynasty. His work, now extant, is the *Simhagiri Vachana*.<sup>21</sup> The type of literary works written by Krishnamacharya has been indicated by later writers like Tallapaka Annamayya and his grandson Chinnanna.<sup>22</sup> Both these well-known poets credit Krishnamacharya for being the first to initiate the tradition of prose-writing in Telugu. Tallapaka Chinnanna mentions that Krishnamacharya was a devout Vaishnava. All accounts of the poet assign him to a century much later than the one in which

<sup>21</sup> B. Ramaraju, *Andhra Janapadageya Sahityamu*, p. 354.

<sup>22</sup> Chaganti Seshayya, *Kavitarangini*, Vol. VI, 6 ff.



Ramanuja flourished. This alone indicates that the story connecting Ramanuja and Krishnamacharya is a fabrication of a later origin. It is possible as is celebrated by legend and tradition that Krishnamacharya lived at Simhachala and composed devotional songs. But we do not have any definite evidence on this matter since the inscriptions from the Simhachalam temple do not refer to Krishnamacharya.

The Story connected with Ramanuja and Kanta Krishnamacharya is clearly an attempt to vindicate the greatness of an *acharya*. An aspirant for the Divine Bliss has to approach the Lord through a teacher. In a nutshell, the story points out that surrender to a teacher is as important as surrender to the Lord. According to some, the story connected with Ramanuja and Kanta Krishnamacharya illustrates a change in the system of worship. Kanta Krishnamacharya, according to this tradition, was a Vaikhanasa priest, and Ramanuja, having established his supremacy over him changed the system of worship from Vaikhanasa to Pancharatra to which he was devoted more. This interpretation is far from being satisfactory. Ramanuja in the later part of his life actively associated himself with Tirupati. He never attempted to change the system of worship there and it remains wedded to the Vaikhanasa system alone. Thus the former explanation of the genesis of the story, namely, that it originated to glorify the role of an *acharya*, appears to be more sound than the later explanation.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN AND THE SON : The Simhachalam temple is a west-facing shrine. Temples are generally east-facing; and this peculiar feature of the shrine is sought to be explained by a story. The master craftsman who built the temple hailed from a distant land. He left his pregnant wife at his native-place and engaged himself in building the temple which took him several years to complete. Meanwhile, his wife gave birth to a son. The child grew into a talented young lad whose precocity began to marvell all. The boy inquired about his father, and being told that his father was at Simhachala, building a shrine, he set out on a journey to the place. His mother told him a device to recognise his father. This was to sell the fruit *Neredu*, the one which was most liked by his father, at an exorbitant price. The person who would buy the

fruit at that price would be his father. The boy reached Simhachala, and by this device recognised his father. His father was glad to receive his son and showed the temple he had just finished. The temple was like the one built by angels and it faced east. But then there was a rub. The young son of the craftman (*silpi*) wanted to show the temple to his mother, gave life to the stone-chariot of the temple and set the whole temple to motion. The *silpi* became wild at this, and before the temple could actually advance, he cut the horses as well as his son with a sword. The temple stopped moving, but by then it had already moved from east to west. Thus the east-facing temple became a west-facing one.

This story is obviously an attempt to explain away the peculiar feature of the west facing deity. To lend more colour to the story, the mutilated horses of the stone chariot are shown as a standing testimony to the incident of the past. Even the image of Narasimha, situated in the niche of the eastern face of the outer wall of the central shrine, is hailed as the original Deity.

### *In the Folk-Lore*

The temple like many other temples is celebrated in folk-lore. The folk songs are of two varieties. One variety of songs describes the various great qualities of Narasimha as a giver of progeny and boons.<sup>23</sup> Another type of popular ballad sung by the villagers is the *Dasavatara Katha*.<sup>24</sup> In this, the principal deity is depicted as 'Varaha'. Thus the folk-lore of the temple does not in any way explain the circumstances under which the principal icon assumed the peculiar shape.

CONCLUSION: During the course of its existence the temple had accumulated a good number of legends and a *sthala purana*. While these continue to have a hold on the imagination of the people, they offer very little material for a historian.

## SECTION III: THE TEMPLE IN LITERATURE

ERRAPRAGADA: Errapragada, of the famous Trinity (*kavi traya*) who translated the Mahabharata into Telugu and who

<sup>23</sup> See N. Gangadharam, *Selayeru*, 80 ff.

<sup>24</sup> B. Rama Raju, loc. cit., p. 350.

flourished in the 14th century was the first to make a reference to Simhadri in the extant literature. In his *Nrisimha Puranam* he mentions Simhadri as a place of pilgrimage which was visited by a sage in the course of his tour to holy places in India.<sup>25</sup> However, Errapragada does not describe the place, as the main aim of his work is to celebrate the Lord Nrisimha of the Ahobala *Kshetra*.

SRINATHA: If Errapragada makes a mention of Simhadri, Srinatha, the Telugu poet *par excellence*, who flourished in the 15th century, describes a festive gathering at the *Kshetra* (Simhadri Tirunallu). Srinatha was a poet laureate of the Reddi court and served Peda Komati Vema (A. D. 1402–20) of the Kondavidu kingdom, and later Virabhadra Reddi (A. D. 1423–34) of the Rajamahendra rajya. The Reddi kings maintained contacts with Simhadri since the days of Anavema (1364–1386), and Srinatha's patron Virabhadra Reddi visited the temple in the course of a military campaign.<sup>26</sup> It is quite possible that the poet accompanied his royal patron and was an eye-witness to the festivals of Simhadrinatha. For his impressions of the festive gathering at Simhadri in his Chātu verses appear to have been the result of actual observation.<sup>27</sup>

Srinatha, in these verses, describes various classes of ladies that assembled at the festive gathering after they climbed up the hill.<sup>28</sup> He caricatures a civilised brahmin lady, a sophisticated lady of the artisan community (*agasale vanneladi*), a singer of the Vaishnava sect playing on her *tumbura*, and a lady who sells betel leaves. From these descriptions, we can know that the festive gatherings of Simhadri were quite a centre of attraction in the 15th century. No wonder that the Lord Narasimha is the subject of one of the devotional songs of Tallapaka Annamacharya who flourished in the 15th century.<sup>29</sup>

Krishnaraya (A.D. 1509–29), the great poet-king of Vijayanagara mentions his visit to Simhadri in his *Amuktamalyada*

<sup>25</sup> Errapragada's *Lakshmi Narasimhapuranam*, 1st canto, verse 11.

<sup>26</sup> S. I. I., Vol. VI, No. 1169.

<sup>27</sup> The authenticity of the verses of this type preserved only by tradition is often disputed. The verses under consideration can be attributed to Srinatha because of his patron's connection with Simhadri.

<sup>28</sup> V. Prabhakara Sastry, *Chatupadyamanjari*, 120 ff.

<sup>29</sup> Tallapaka Krtulu, Vol. X, verse 182.

and this is also repeated in the *Manucharitra* of Krishnaraya's court-poet Allasani Peddana. In these works, the conquest of the Gajapati territories is beautifully expressed thus: the Vijaya Sāsana of Krishnaraya incised on a pillar of victory erected at Potnuru would be read by the gods that descend to the mountain Simhadri to witness the festivals of the Lord.<sup>30</sup> Krishnaraya's visit to Simhadri is also mentioned in *Krishnaraya Vijaya* by Dhurjati, the well known poet of the 17th century, who notes in his work that Krishnaraya planted a pillar of victory at Simhadri.<sup>31</sup> Pingali Surana, the renowned Telugu poet, who lived in the later half of the 16th century, also mentions about *Simhachaladhisa* in his great classic *Kalapurnodayam* while describing the pilgrimages of Manikandhara.<sup>31a</sup>

Basing themselves on the story of the origin of Narasimha of Simhachala contained in the *Sthalamahatmya*, two poets composed their *prabandhas*. The first writer is Kuchimanchi Timmakavi who flourished in the 18th century.<sup>32</sup> This poet hailed from the East Godavari District and was patronised by the *Zamindars* of Pithapuram. A prolific writer, he has many pieces to his credit which include the *kavya*, *sataka*, and *sthalamahatmya*. His work *Simhasailamahatmya* is a *prabandha* of five cantos which narrates the story of the incarnation of God Vishnu as Varaha Narasimha.<sup>33</sup> The poet, in narrating the story, does not deviate from the story contained in the *Sthalamahatmya*. The second poet, Kattamuri Kameswara Kavi, a 19th century poet, wrote '*Lakshmi Narasimhacharitra*'.<sup>34</sup> We are not in a position to know the autobiographical details of the author, as the entire

<sup>30</sup> *Amuktamalyada*, 1, 40. Krishnaraya describes the Lord of Simhadri as *dambha kesari*. The expression can be interpreted thus: the angry lion-form is a make-believe (*dambha*). The inner self is an endearing God, ready to respond to the entreaties of the devotees.

<sup>31</sup> *Krishnaraya Vijayamu*, iii, 74.

<sup>31a</sup> *Kalapurnodayam*, canto II, verse, 126.

<sup>32</sup> The poet himself mentions in his work *Rukmini Pariniyam* the date of his composition as A.D. 1715, and this gives us the age in which he flourished.

<sup>33</sup> R. No. 1617 of the catalogue of the Madras Oriental Mss. Library (Recent Acquisition).

<sup>34</sup> His age can be fixed with the help of the work of a contemporary poet. See Adidam Rama Rao, *Vismrtakalingandhrakavyulu*.

text of the work is not available.<sup>35</sup> The story of the work closely follows the *Kshetramahatmya* and ends with an account of Prahlada's worship of Simhadrinatha after his rescue from the clutches of his father by the timely intervention of Lord Vishnu.

The theme of the Muslim invasion of the temple became the subject of a *sataka* by Gogulapati Kurmanatha. Kurmanatha, the writer of *Simhadri Narasimha Sataka*, wrote the following other works: the *Mrtyumjayavilasamu*, the *Sundariman Satakamu*, the *Vijayarama Satakamu*, the *Ekantaseva* and the *Lakshminarayana Samvādam*.<sup>36</sup> He was patronised by Pusapati Vijayaramaraja (A.D. 1713-57) of Vizianagaram. A man of piety and devotion, Kurmanatha used to visit frequently the four important shrines of the District—Simhachalam, Srikurmam, Ramatirtham and Padmanabham. As tradition runs, at one time, when Kurmanatha was sojourning at Simhachalam, a contingent of the Muslim army invaded the temple. The priests and the servants of the temple became panicky and took to flight. Then Kurmanatha went into the central shrine of the deity with great rage. He was angry with the Lord who sat tight tolerating the evil deeds of the wicked. Anger sometimes gives rise to poetry: Kurmanatha broke into poetry full of invective and satire. Such was the devotion of the poet that the Lord saved the situation by sending a swarm of bees which drove off the invading hordes. Then the poet praises the Lord for his greatness. This *sataka* of Kurmanatha is a popular work and is known to many devotees of the Lord. The devotees of the Lord usually cite this work to show the efficacy of the devotion to Simhadrinatha.

Literary references apart, there are several anonymous writers who sang devotional songs in praise of Lord Nrhari. There are still others who dedicated their works to Simhadrinatha praising his qualities. Some of the devotional songs are now preserved in the manuscripts of the Oriental Manuscripts Library at Madras. A centum of songs are contained in the *Narasimha*

<sup>35</sup> R. 527 of the catalogue of Telugu Mss. of Oriental Mss. Library, Madras.

<sup>36</sup> *Kurmanatha Kavi Krtulu* (Published by Andhra Vijnana Samiti, Vizianagaram).



*Satakamu*, while a few similar songs are contained in the *Lakshmi Narasimha Charitamu*.<sup>37</sup> Among the many poets of the Visakhapatnam District that dedicated their works to Simhadrinatha, the notable are Sripada Venkatachala Kavi (18th century) and Achyuta Rama Kavi (19th century) the writers of *Ramakrishnopakhyanam* and *Surataniparinayamu*, respectively.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> R. Nos. 221 and 527 of the catalogue of Telugu Mss. of the Madras Oriental Mss. Library.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, R. Nos. 308 and 437.

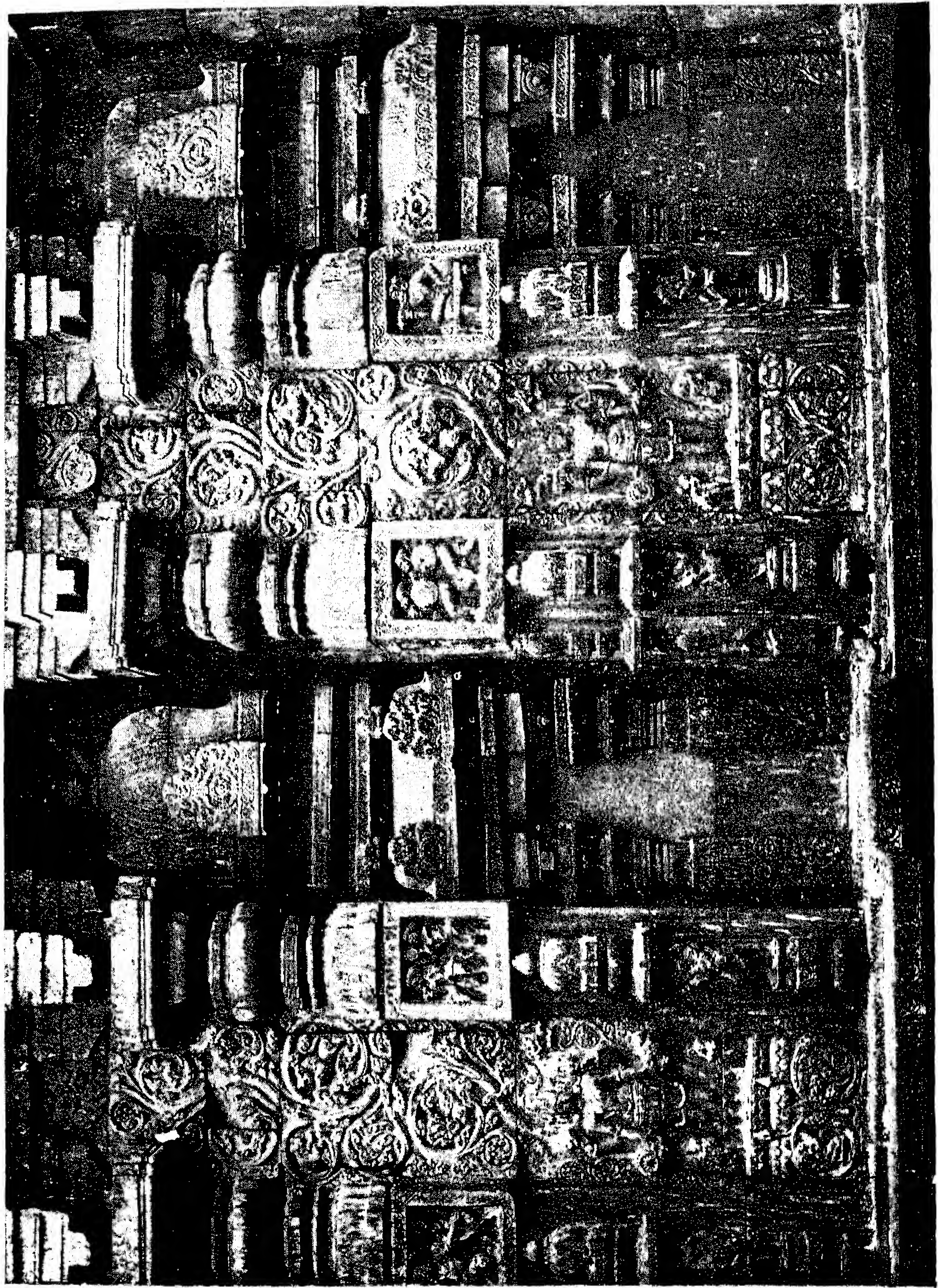


Fig. 12 : The Wall of the Frontal Porch (Another Side)

## Origin and Development

The beginnings of the Simhachalam Temple are shrouded in mystery. Popular tradition current in the Visakhapatnam District credits the temple with a hoary past. There are scholars who believe that Simhachalam was once a Buddhist centre similar to the Buddhist sanctuaries at Sankaram (*sangharamam*) and Ramatirtham which are situated 30 miles south and 40 miles north of Simhachalam, respectively, and which flourished in the early centuries of Christian Era.<sup>1</sup> Dr. K. R. Subrahmanyam in his *Buddhist remains in Andhra* notes that this 'Buddhist Simhachalam' later became, like Amaravati and other places, a stronghold of Hinduism, and cites in support the report made by Alexander Rea who surveyed the hills in 1908-09.<sup>2</sup> But this evidence which appears to be the sheet anchor not only for Dr. Subrahmanyam but for all other scholars, does not appear to be conclusive. Though Rea mentions in his *Annual Report of Arch. Survey*<sup>3</sup> that he noted remains of circular walls of a stupa at a place called Daralova, four miles northwest of Simhachalam in the Kambalakonda hill range, an examination of the spot reveals nothing. The Buddhist remains which Mr. Rea noted are not to be found now. It must be noted that Mr. Rea's survey was merely exploratory and has not been followed up so far. It has to be noted, again, that the spring at Daralova is not a perennial one and the Buddhist monks of the time must have preferred the Simhachalam hill range, well-known for its certain and abundant water supply from its ever-bubbling springs.

On the Simhachalam hill, however, there is nothing to indicate that there was once an ancient habitat. No coins, pottery

<sup>1</sup> *Aradhana*, July and August 1958; J. A. H. R. S. Vol. I, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Buddhist Remains in Andhra*, pp. 13 and 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of Arch. Survey of India*, Southern Circle, for the year 1908-09, p. 179.



or structural remains have ever come to light to suggest the antiquity of the place.<sup>4</sup> Thus, in the present state of our knowledge, nothing definite can be established from the argument that Simhachalam was a Buddhist site.

The evidence of the Sthalapurana, as has already been described, is of very little value for determining the origin and development of the temple.<sup>5</sup> The Sthalapurana ascribes the construction of the temple to king Pururava of Kritayuga. According to this version, the king discovered the image of the Lord, hidden under a mass of earth, restored it and revived its worship by constructing a temple and providing for *angarangabhoga*. Since this story is referred to in a 13th century record, all that we can say is that the temple was built long before the 13th century.<sup>6</sup>

To look to the Mulavirat of the temple for tracing the origins of the *Kshetra* is by no means an easy task. For the Mulavirat, Varaha Narasimha, which is no doubt the most ancient icon of worship of the *Kshetra*, is a peculiar one.<sup>7</sup> Nowhere do we find an image of Vishnu covered up so completely with sandal wood paste as to impart it the shape of a *linga* (Fig. 25). The inner image, the *nijaswarupa*, which is open to view on the 3rd day of the month of Vaisakha differs from all other Vishnu forms known to medieval times. Though all the early inscriptions<sup>8</sup> of the temple starting from the last quarter of the 11th century describe him as Narasimha and by no other name except that of Hari, the *nijaswarupa* considerably confounds his identification with Narasimha.

The image as it appears on the Akshaya Tritiya day is a block of stone about 2½ ft. in height with a crude form of the face of a boar, the tail of a lion and two hands. (Fig. 24). There is neither ornamentation nor drapery. The limbs are not distinct either. The legs have no feet, and the hands are devoid of

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Rea himself admits this in his report. See *Annual Reports of Arch. Survey of India*, Southern Circle, Vol. 907-8, p. 179.

<sup>5</sup> *Simhachala Kshetramahatmyam*. For the full story of the work, refer *supra*, chapter IV.

<sup>6</sup> See *supra*, chapter IV.

<sup>7</sup> Inscriptions from the temple describe the principal deity as 'Varaha Narasimhadevara', 'Yajna Varaha', 'Varahadevara', and 'Narasimhanatha'. S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 759, 761, 762, 845, 987 and 1187.

<sup>8</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 1102 and 114.

palms. Even the boar face and the tail are not distinct. It appears as though a limestone is cut crudely to give the outline of a human torso. This form, called as Varaha Narasimha, is at striking variance with the scriptural sanction for the preparation of a Narasimha image<sup>9</sup> and hence it has provoked much discussion regarding its identification.

### *A Traditional Theory*

There is a line of tradition current in the district which affirms that the Varaha Narasimha image is a Siva *linga* which has been converted into a Vaishnava image by Ramanuja.<sup>10</sup> According to this tradition, Ramanuja, the great Vaishnava saint, in the course of his tours, came to Simhachala, found it to be a centre of Saivism, challenged the priests there to a religious dispute, and won them over to his side.<sup>11</sup> He then called the masons of the temple and ordered them to convert the *linga* into a *Vaishnava* icon of the Varaha Narasimha. Soon the work of conversion began, but before the work was finished the icon began to bleed. This was taken to mean that the Lord was displeased, and acting under the impulse of restoring its former shape, the *Sthapatis* applied sandal wood paste all over the image. Then the flow of blood stopped. Thereupon they presumed that the Lord desired to manifest himself in that form. Thus the idol came to be kept in the shape of a *linga*, allowing only a single day for the display of the new form. Even on this day, the daily food-offering is temporarily put off till the cylindrical shape is restored once again by the night fall.

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<sup>9</sup> The image of this type has neither the sanction of any iconographic text, nor can an image of this type be found elsewhere among the extant images of Vishnu (See T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, part II, 32 ff. for the different iconographical texts mentioning the image of Narasimha. See also *infra*, chapter X. It is mentioned only in the *Kshetramahatmyamu*, in the *Dhyanaslokas* and the *stavas* of the Lord (See *Infra*, chapter X, p. 291) And, for all we know these came into existence only after the deity had attained its popularity.

<sup>10</sup> Echoes of a similar tradition are also heard about the Srikurmeswara Temple at Srikurmam and about the Sri Venkateswara Temple at Tirupati. In popular imagination, Ramanuja converted all these shrines, which were once centres of Saivism, into Vaishnavite shrines.

<sup>11</sup> For another version of the same tradition, see *Supra*, chapter IV.



### *The Arguments in support of the Tradition*

This tradition, though it is unsupported by any literary testimony, has many supporters.<sup>12</sup> People who take this view argue that the Simhachala Kshetra was a Siva *kshetra*, and point to certain features in the installation of the image, in the ritual, in the names associated with the *kshetra* and in the articles of gift to the Lord which go to prove, according to them, that the place was originally a Saiva *kshetra*. Firstly, irrespective of the shape of the *linga*, the *Mulavirat* is installed in exactly the same way a Siva *linga* is usually installed. It lies in the centre of the *garbhagrha* with a water chute (*somasutra*). This is unusual for a Vishnu image since it is customarily installed in such a way that it can touch the back wall of the *garbhagrha*. Secondly, the festival *Kamadahana* celebrated in the shrine is essentially of Saivite origin. Thirdly, the hill-range on which the *Kshetra* is situated is described as Kailasa range; the bathing-ghat of the temple is described as *Gangadhara*; and the gates at the foot of the hill on either side are known as *Bhairavadvara* and *Madhavadvara*.<sup>13</sup> All these descriptions show a predominant Saiva influence. Finally, the devotees even now make a gift of *vibhuti*, cows, pulses and rice which are all objects generally given to Lord Siva.

### *The Arguments in support of the Vaishnava Origin*

The protagonists of the Vaishnava origin, however, argue that these arguments are all deliberate attempts to debase the prestige of Vaishnava Shrines in general and of Ramanuja in particular who enjoy great popular esteem. The devout *Vaishnavas* believe that Simhachala Narasimha is a self manifesting (*svayamvyakta*) deity, and to trace any deficiency in the make-up of the image is a blasphemy. The Lord willed to be in the form of Varaha Narasimha, covered with sandal wood paste. It is one of his *lilas* (divine sports). Since the sandal wood icon is the *dhruvabera*, the original icon (the *nijaswarupa*) to be seen on the Akshaya trtiya, is not a full image. Hence *mahanaivedya* is not offered to the image. Answering the principal

<sup>12</sup> See supra, chapter IV.

<sup>13</sup> A few inscriptions of the mediæval times refer to Gangadhara and Bhairava though none mention Kailasa and Madhava, see Appendix-II.

point of attack, the *Vaishnava* devotees reply to the four arguments adduced by the other school of thought as follows: Firstly, the mode of installation is in accordance with the accepted principles of the *Agamas*. The *Padmasamhita* of the *Pancharatragama* prescribes a central position of the sanctum when the image is alone and is in standing position.<sup>14</sup> Secondly, the *Kamadahana* festival which is generally found to be an anomaly in a *Vaishnava* Shrine is in fact not so. This festival has also been in vogue in the *Srikurmesvara* Temple at *Srikur-mam*. Though it has no sanction of the scriptures, it is a festival which has roots in the age old custom (*sistachara*). The *Kamadahanotsava* as it is understood in the temple does not refer to the story of the burning of the cupid by Lord Siva. In its essence, it is only a festival of purification. This type of ceremony is prescribed in the *agama sastra* for every philanthropist who desires to build a temple.<sup>15</sup> In fact every one associated with the temple has to purify his mind by purging himself of all mundane desires. It is on this principle that the *Kamadahana* festival is observed. By a number of sacrifices, all the limbs of the body of *Kama*, are purified. Thirdly, the words *Kailasa* and *Ganga* are generally thought of in impersonal terms. The *Kailasa* stands for any hill range having a sacred halo about it, and the *Ganga*, for any sacred waters. The *Simhachalam* hill-range is the most conspicuous hill-range in the region, famous for its sacred spots. This has given rise to the description of the hill-range as the *Kailasa* hill-range. Since the spring *Gangadhara* is the biggest of all the springs of the hill-range, this came to be known as the *Gangadhara*. The idols of *Bhairavaswami* and *Madhavaswami* at the foot of the hill are not gate-keepers of the temple. They should be stationed at the entrance gates of the temple and should be recipients of daily worship and the pacification ceremony. The *Vigrahas*, which have no part in the daily ritual and pacification ceremony, cannot be classified as *dvarapalakas*. The *Bhairavaswami* and *Madhavaswamy* at the foot of the hill are beyond the enclosure walls of the temple, and are not recipients of any type of worship. They belong to different villages altogether. *Bhairava*

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<sup>14</sup> *Padmasamhita*, chapter 13, verses 39 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, chapter 18, verse 80.

stands in the village of Adivivaram and Madhava in the village of Madhavadhara. Madhavaswami is worshipped as a separate deity, and Bhairava is not offered any ritual. On these grounds it is asserted that Bhairavaswamy and Madhavaswamy have nothing to do with the temple proper and their names have no relevance to the identification of the Lord Varaha Narasimha on the hill. Fourthly, the offering of cooked rice, jaggery, pulses, *vibhuthi* to the Lord are quite justified. The underlying idea of all the offerings is to show gratitude to the Lord. It is only narrow sectarian exclusiveness that distinguishes certain offerings as Saivite and certain others as Vaishnavite. Thus the Vaishnavites assert that the Simhachala *kshetra* has always been a Vaishnava *kshetra*, and the arguments of those who assert that it was originally a Saiva shrine are baseless.

### *The Two Arguments*

When the two lines of arguments are juxtaposed, the counter-arguments by the Vaishnavites sound quite unconvincing. The *Kamadahana* in a Vaishnava shrine is an anachronism. If it be a symbol signifying the mere burning of desire, the practice is not true of any other Vishnu shrine, except the one at Srikur-mam which is again believed to be a Saivite shrine, transformed into a Vaishnava shrine by Ramanuja. Even if it be a merely purification ceremony, to name it as Kamadahana must be revolting to the sentiments of any Vaishnava, for Kama is verily the son of Vishnu. Secondly, the name of the hill-range 'Kailasa' as the abode of Vishnu is unthinkable. A hill and a temple for Vishnu is all right, more specially when he is in the lion form. The evidence of Yadavadri and Ahobilam is quite conclusive in this respect. But nowhere do we find a hill-range with a temple of Vishnu described as Kailasa, the *hoary* and traditional abode of Siva. Thirdly, Bhairava and Madhava as *dvarapalas* are sought to be removed from the argument on the ground that they do not receive the daily worship and the pacification ceremony which would be their due if they were the *dvarapalas*. But it could as well be that these attentions were denied them only since the central deity came to be converted into Vishnu. The location of these images outside the enclosure wall and in Adivivaram and Madhavadhara which lie

on either side of the steps leading up the hill does not deny them their status as *dvarapalas* in the Saivite context, where the whole hill-range is Kailasa, the abode, and also the *abiding Siva in the linga form*.

### *Evaluation*

It is however difficult to pass a judgment on the controversy such as the one that is now waged on the Varaha Narasimha of Simhachala. It has already been shown as to how the story which alleges that Ramanuja converted the existing Saiva shrine into a Vaishnava shrine is a fabrication of a later date. The region around Simhachalam comes into limelight only in the last quarter of 11th century and by this time we have inscriptions to attest that the Simhachalam temple was a Vaishnava centre.<sup>16</sup> We have no means of inferring the past state of the temple before the last quarter of 11th century on the basis of any positive evidence. Such being the case, the origins of the temple, the nature of the principal icon and tradition pertaining to it, can only be visualised on the basis of the general trend of the growth of sacred shrines in India. When one examines the story of the genesis of the temples at Tirupati, Puri and Pandaripur, it becomes evident that these temples begin as a small village or forest shrine. A local spring or a tree or a saint get invested with miraculous powers and attract attention. A deity is then installed at the place by the village folk. The icon is more often crude in shape as it is made by a novice in the craft. With the growth of civilisation, a temple then arises to house the image and in course of time, it develops into a big temple-complex. This process of development leads to a peculiar situation of the image in a crude shape and the temple in glittering colours. Such circumstances must have probably given rise to the several theories which try to explain the incongruous nature of the icon and the several

<sup>16</sup> The earliest inscription (S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1194) of the year 1087 (*Sakabde nidhi (bindu) Khendu Ganite*), describes the deity as Lord Hari and the endowment is placed under the care of Sri Vaishnavas. The next inscription that of Kulottunga (S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1144) of the year 1096 mentions gifts to the *bhoga* of the Alvar Shrine of the temple. The two instances show that even by the last quarter of the 11th century the temple came to be under the influence of Sri Vaishnavas.



practices which attempt to endow the icon a more colourful shape than the original one.

**THE 13TH CENTURY RENOVATION:** The history of the Simhachalam temple and its development before the 13th century cannot be scientifically reconstructed. For, a thorough and wholesale renovation was made in the year A.D. 1268 by a commander of Narasimha Deva I (1238-63) who, under orders from the king, appears to have demolished all the earlier structures. The main structures that we see are the central shrine and the frontal porch. The cloister and the marriage-hall came into existence in the year 1268, as may be gathered from an inscription of the date from the temple (S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1142). No structure of the earlier times is extant, though we have about 37 inscriptions prior to the date of renovation.

### *The Earlier Inscriptions from the Temple*

The inscriptions of the temple begin to appear from the last quarter of the 11th century. They are now to be found all over the place. On the walls of assembly-hall there are about 18 inscriptions which belong to the 12th century and the early 13th century.<sup>17</sup> On the outer walls of the vestibule there is an inscription of the 12th century.<sup>18</sup> Again, on the lintel slabs of the two entrances to the Kalyanamandapa there are three records from the 12th century.<sup>19</sup> Three Tamil inscriptions may be noted on loose slabs, the most important of them being Kulottunga's inscription of S. 1021 (A.D. 1099), which is now on a slab in front of the mukhamandapa.<sup>20</sup> A few more inscriptions belonging to the 11th and 12th centuries lie on the inner walls of the frontal porch, on pillars in the modern structures like the Gangadhara and Alvar shrine and on the walls of *tiruchuttumala*.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> S.I.I. Vol. No. VI, Nos. 1176, 1177, 1178, 1180, 1181, 1183, 1187, 1188, 1189, 1193, 1199, 1201, 1203, 1204, 1207 and 1208. Of these, three are mutilated.

<sup>18</sup> This inscription has not been copied by the Epigraphy Department. It is, however, a private record and is not of any consequence except for the date. See Appendix No. II.

<sup>19</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 92, 1167 and 693.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, Nos. 1144, 1214 and 1215.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, Nos. 1194, 95, 96, 1200, 1213, 1172 to 75, 799 and 952.

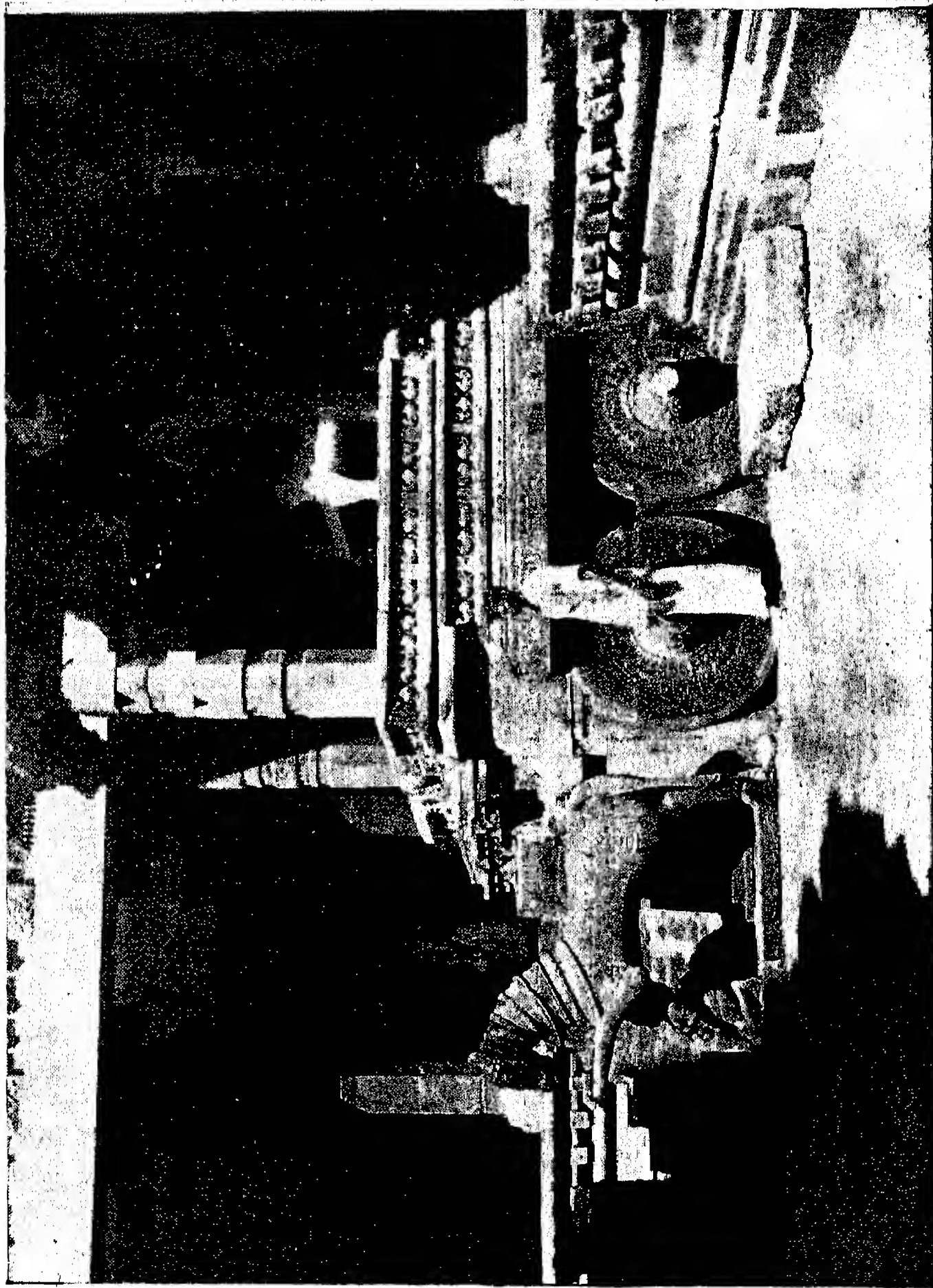


Fig. 13: The Stone Chariot

### *The Scheme of Renovation*

The provenance of the inscriptions shows that the scheme of renovation proceeded on peculiar lines. The 13th century renovators did not choose to re-engrave the inscriptions of the early times.<sup>22</sup> They tried, as far as possible, to use the slabs on which they are incised as the building material for the new structures. Such material as could easily be fitted into the new structure they freely utilised. They threw away the rest. Some of the structures thus thrown away, notably the shafts of the pillars, have been made use of in the modern additions to the temple like the Alvar shrine, the kitchen and the porch by the side of Gangadhara. This appears to be the explanation for the presence of the early inscriptions on the structures built in the 13th century and in modern times. But evidently these pillars and stones must have formed part of an earlier shrine. Now the question is when was the original shrine built? And who was responsible for its construction?

Though we cannot answer these questions satisfactorily, we can visualise the circumstances under which the temple emerged into limelight from a state of comparative obscurity by examining the very early inscriptions of the temple.

The earliest of the inscriptions is the one dated in the 11th regnal year of Tribhuvana Chakravarti Kulottunga Deva, which is preserved in the Alvar shrine of the temple.<sup>23</sup> The shrine itself, as the flat roofing indicates, is a modern one. The shafts of the earlier times have been made use of as the two pillars that support the ceiling of the shrine. On the four faces of the lower half of the shaft of the pillar are incised four early inscriptions of the temple. The present inscription occupies the north face of the pillar. Though the 11th year of the king Kulottunga is mentioned in the inscription, the *saka* date given

<sup>22</sup> In many of the temples renovated under the Chola kings of 11th – 13th centuries, the renovators used to preserve the earlier inscriptions by re-engraving them on the new structures. This used to be quite a common practice in the Tamilnad of the Medieval times; A.R.E. 1910, ii para 24.

<sup>23</sup> S. I. I. VI, No. 1172, the inscription cannot now be verified as it is built into the raised platform of the Alvar shrine.

in the introductory verse is incorrect. It reads as *sakahde nidhi khendu ganite* (S. 109). As it is, it makes no sense, and one who is acquainted with *sardula* metre can easily infer that some letters are missing between *nidhi* and *khendu*. The line can be read as *sakabde nidhi (bindu) Khendu ganite* (S. 1009 = A.D. 1087). Then we are faced with an anachronism. The year A. D. 1087 must be equivalent to Kulottunga's 17th regnal year since he ascended the throne in A. D. 1070. But this anachronism can be resolved if we remember that Kulottunga's accession of Vengi throne took place in the year A. D. 1076, and Vijayaditya VII was ruling the kingdom of Vengi till A. D. 1076. There is nothing surprising if Kulottunga counted his regnal years from A. D. 1076 in a country in which Vijayaditya VII's influence was strong. The next record in the chronological order also belongs to Kulottunga and dated in S. 1021 (A.D. 1099). Thus we have a working hypothesis that the two early inscriptions can be assigned to Kulottunga's reign.

The evidence of the above two inscriptions can profitably be interpreted against the background of the political history of the region. The immediate vicinity of Simhachalam did not assume any strategic importance till the 11th century. We have seen how Kulottunga, the first ruler of the Chalukya Chola dynasty, had deputed his son Mummadi Chola to Kalinga in the year A. D. 1076 to safeguard the position of Anantavarma Choda Ganga<sup>24</sup>. Starting from this date, the region around Simhachalam began to attain pointed historical importance in this phase of the activity of the Chalukya Cholas. The officers of Kulottunga, who were responsible for rechristening Visakhapattana as Kulottunga Chola pattana, must have activated the life of the temple.<sup>25</sup>

### *Summary of the Entire Argument*

In the first place, it cannot be asserted that Simhachalam Temple was originally a Buddhist shrine. It was believed even

<sup>24</sup> See supra, chapter II, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Doubts may arise as to why officers of the Cholas, a dynasty devoted to Saivism should have revived a Vishnu shrine. But it must be noted that some of the officers of Kulottunga were Vaishnavites. One such officer constructed a Vishnu temple at a place near Draksharama – See E. I. Vol. XXII, 135 ff.

in the 13th century that the temple had a hoary past. However, it cannot be asserted that it was a Saiva shrine which was later converted into a Vaishnava shrine. In the light of the political history of the region and the very early inscriptions of the temple, it can be stated that the officers of Kulottunga, the first ruler of the Chalukya Chola dynasty, activated the entire region and life of the temple in the last quarter of the 11th century. Thus the temple must have begun as a forest shrine several centuries prior to 11th century but its real history started from the 11th.

The history of the temple after it was revived by the Chalukya-Chola officers was equally obscure. It did not attract the attention of the Gangas, the imperial dynasty of Kalinga. The region around about Simhachalam continued to be under the influence of Chalukya-Cholas and their subordinates. The temple was at the time far from being popular. There are about 37 inscriptions in the entire range starting from the last quarter of the 11th century and ending in the later half of the 13th century. The Ganga kings began to evince interest in the region around Simhachalam only in the first quarter of the 13th century. There are two inscriptions in the temple preserved on the wall of the assembly-hall, which belong to the reign of Anangabhimha III (A. D. 1211-33).<sup>26</sup> His son and successor, Narasimha Deva I, showed even greater interest in the region than his predecessor, and planned the wholesale renovation.

### *The Renovation*

The reason that prompted Narasimhadeva to restore the shrine can only be conjectured. It might be that the central shrine already centuries old had given way; or it might be that the earlier structure was so small and colourless that the king wanted to convert it into some thing really big and majestic. We know for certain that Narasimha Deva, the builder of the Konarak temple, had a penchant for the grandiose. During his reign he visited the temple,<sup>27</sup> and it was during one of those visits that he was struck by the idea of renovating the temple. He bade his general accomplish the task, and the work got completed in the reign of his successor.

<sup>26</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 1180, 1201.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, No. 1188.



in a record of A. D. 1268, conspicuously incised on a pillar to the right of the *sri bhandara*, this general proudly claims that he finished the building up of the 'sri vimana' 'mukhamandapa', and 'natyamandapa' 'tiruchuttumala' in accordance with the orders he received from his master. It has to be noted that the *tiruchuttumala*, the cloister which includes the *asthana mandapa* was built on the model of the *tiruchuttumala* round the central shrine of the Kurmesvara temple at Srikurman. The pillared hall in the North-west, now called as *kalyana mandapa*, must be the *natyamandapa* referred to in the inscription. This appears to be the last structure built by this general. For, the corbels of the pillars of this *kalyana mandapa*, though in general conforming to the main pattern of corbels, the inverted-lotus type acquire pendants, and indicate the signs of a later stage (Fig. 18).

ANDAL SHRINE: The dating of the small shrine of Andal which lies on the southern side of the main temple is a trickish problem. Though the Andal shrine has no inscription, and thick coat of chunam completely obscures the sculptural and architectural features of the shrine, the four pillars in front of the shrine, and the *torana* on the entrance gate seem to offer a clue to its date. The corbels of the pillars are of the same inverted-lotus type that is present in the other structures; and the *torana* of the shrine resembles the *torana* on the entrance of the *mukhamandapa* of the principal shrine. On the basis of these factors, it is generally understood that the construction of this small shrine is coeval with the other structures of the temple. But more careful examination falsifies this general belief. The ground plan of the temple shows that the Andal shrine is abutting on the southern face of the temple without any balancing wing on the otherside. The walls of the shrine and the sculpture betray inferior craftsmanship belonging a later period. On the basis of this valid evidence, it can only be concluded that the shrine was constructed in the modern period using the materials of the early period. The pillars and the *torana* belong to a period earlier than 13th century but the shrine itself belongs to the 18th century.

THE TEMPLE AFTER RENOVATION: The renovation of the temple in the 13th century added a new prestige to the temple. The

establishment of a centre of religion and learning by Narahari Tirtha, the famous Madhwa divine shortly after this renovation increased further its popularity. While the successive pupils of this great savant made the religious life of the temple active, the ruling kings of the Ganga dynasty, the feudatory chiefs like the Matsyas of Oddadi and the Chalukyas of Elamanchi endowed the temple richly making provision for the cultivation of *Veda*, *Purana* and *Itihasa*. The numerous inccriptions of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries testify to this glorious phase of the life of the temple. The Gajapatis who displaced the Gangas in the second quarter of the 15th century continued the traditions of their predecessors.

SUBSIDIARY SHRINES AND MANDAPAS: A few subsidiary shrines, *mandapas* and other places of popular interest came into being in this epoch after renovation. An inscription of S. 1215 (A.D. 1291) mentions Vaikunthanatha stationed on the cliff north of Simhagiri.<sup>28</sup> This must be the Lord of the temple which now lies on the cliff in a completely ruined condition. The second structure is the *mandapa* in which the *Vantasala* (kitchen) is at present situated. This *mandapa* was evidently built to take advantage of the natural spring which brings forth water in a continuous flow. We are quite justified in identifying this *mandapa* with the *mandapa* situated at the spring mentioned in an inscription of the 14th century. It is stated in the inscription that Visvanatha, the chief of the Chalukyan dynasty was responsible for constructing this *mandapa*.<sup>29</sup> The shrine of Tripurantaka, mentioned in an inscription of the 14th century, was also erected during this phase.<sup>30</sup> The shrine of Anjaneya was constructed a little later,<sup>31</sup> since an inscription of the 16th century refers to the installation of an image of Hanumantha.

Thus during the phase between the 13th and 16th centuries, Simhachalam slowly became a popular Kshetra. Places like Gangadhara, the Lord's Tirthavari and Bhairavadvara, the entrance at the foot of the hill, became popular during this phase.<sup>32</sup> Thus Simhachalam was slowly becoming a popular

<sup>28</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 902.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, No. 1002.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, No. 1020.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, No. 694.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, No. 947 and 1107.

*kshetra* with all its appurtenances.

KRISHNARAYA AND THE TEMPLE : In the history of the temple in the 16th century, the visit of Krishnaraya, the great monarch of Vijayanagara kingdom, is an event which raises certain problems. The first problem is whether Krishnaraya erected any structure in the place or not. Nuniz, the Portuguese traveller who visited Vijayanagara just after the reign of Krishnaraya, gives us to understand that Krishnaraya did erect a grand temple in the place. He writes thus : "And he went forward a hundred leagues into the kingdom finding no one to bar his progress till he got to Symandry which was a large city in which he halted for six months waiting for the king of Orya. He sent many messages to say that he was waiting for him in the field but he never came. And in this city he did many works and gave alms to the temples, erected therein a very grand temple to which he gave much revenue. And he commanded to engrave on it an inscription which says "perhaps when these letters are decayed the king of Orya will give battle to the king of Bisnaga. If the king of Orya erases them, his wife shall be given to smiths who shoe the horses of the king of Bisnaga." <sup>33</sup> The entire statement of Nuniz is loaded with inaccuracies. Firstly the place Simhadri (Nuniz calls it Symandry) was never a large city. Secondly Krishnaraya did not halt there for six months. He came to the temple on the 30th March, 1516<sup>34</sup> and was back in his capital by June of the same year.<sup>35</sup> Hence his stay could not have extended to more than two months. Thirdly, the obscene language of the inscription which, according to Nuniz, Krishnaraya commanded to be engraved on the temple is in such bad taste that it leads one, doubt its veracity. We can seriously doubt if Krishnaraya would ever have ordered his men to incise such a thing which would permanently mar his good name. Hence, the statement that Krishnaraya, erected a very grand temple, along with all its inaccuracies, may be discarded. In the entire *kshetra* we do not find any structure which can architecturally be ascribed to the Vijayanagar period ; nor can we find the inscription mentioned by Nuniz.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Sewell, *Forgotten Empire*, p. 390.

<sup>34</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 694.

<sup>35</sup> A.R.E. No. 457 of 1923.

KRISHNARAYA'S JAYASTAMBHA : We have another question : Did Krishnaraya erect a pillar of victory (*Jayastambha*) at Simhachalam ? This erection of *Jayastambha* by Krishnaraya is referred to in the Telugu works, the *Rayavachakamu* and the *Krishnaraya Vijayamu*.<sup>36</sup> In one of the contemporary inscriptions the actual erection is attributed to Krishnaraya's general, Kondamarasayya.<sup>37</sup> But in his *Amuktamalyada* Krishnaraya mentions that the pillar of victory was erected at Potnuru.<sup>38</sup> The evidence of the inscriptions points out that Potnuru was his provincial headquarters in the days of the Ganga rule over Kalinga.<sup>39</sup> Be that as it may, local tradition strongly points out that a pillar of victory was planted by Krishnaraya at the northern edge of the valley. Even searching examination of the spot reveals no pillar ; but one can even now see a round stone structure of some six feet height with another similar structure of lesser dimensions and height placed within it. Iron chains which can be seen lying down below the structure are believed to have been used for keeping the *Jayastambha* erect. This might have been the place where Krishnaraya erected the *Jayastambha* ; but the evidence is not conclusive.

### *The First Raid*

The normal life of the temple was for a period disturbed in the later half the 16th century. It was during this half century that the region around Simhachalam witnessed for the first time the Muslim rule under Mohammad Kuli Kutb Shah of Golkonda (A.D. 1580-1612). There is reason to believe that during his reign, damage was caused to the temple by the irresponsible Muslim officers of the king. Firstly, a tradition current in Visakhapatnam District affirms that the officers of the Sultan of Golkonda invested the temple. This tradition receives

<sup>36</sup> *Rayavachakamu*, p. 108 ; *Krishnaraya Vijayamu*, III, 74.

<sup>37</sup> A.R.E. No. 76 of 1912.

<sup>38</sup> The erection of the Pillar at Potnuru is mentioned by Krishnaraya (*Amuktamalyada*, 1, 40) and his court poet, Allasani Peddana (*Manucharitra*, 1, 39).

<sup>39</sup> A number of inscriptions from Simhachalam temple refer to Potnuruvidu and the royal officers of the place. The antiquities of the place, the temple in the outskirts and the *nagastambha* in the field no doubt go to prove its importance in the former times. But the Pillar of victory planted by Krishnaraya cannot be seen now.

corroboration from some contemporary inscriptions. An inscription of A.D. 1580 from Guntur District states that there was a revolt against the Muslim rule in that year organised by local chieftains. Mohammad Kuli appointed one Malka Amin Malka to put down these rebellious chiefs.<sup>40</sup> This chief made a victorious march through the coastal Andhra and reached Srikurmam in A. D. 1599. In an inscription of this year from the Kurmeswara Temple, Amin Malka proudly speaks of an act of vandalism committed against the temple.<sup>41</sup> It is thus possible that the Simhachalam temple fell a prey to the destructive passion of the Muslim officer and mutilation of the sculpture that one now witnesses might have taken place at this time. It appears again that the unfortunate incidents were reported to the Sultan Kuli for his intervention. The Sultan deputed a Hindu officer under him to set the matters right in both the places, Simhachalam and Srikurmam. An inscription of A. D. 1604 records that one Asvarayudu, an officer of the king, instituted endowments for the brahmins and the priests of the Srikurmam temple and revived the religious life of the Simhachalam temple after a period of inactivity for quite a few years.<sup>42</sup>

THE PUSAPATI FAMILY AND THE SIMHACHALAM TEMPLE: During the later half of the 17th Century, the temple came to be patronized by the *zamindars* of the Pusapati family. These rulers before they made Vizianagaram their principal seat, stationed themselves at Kumili and Bhogapuram (about 8 miles east and southeast of Vizianagaram), and their interest in the temple commenced with the very start of their career at Kumili. Their devotion to the Simhachalam temple was such that they built a Rama temple at Ramatirtham, situated three miles south of Kumili on the model of the Simhachalam shrine. The corbels of some of the pillars of this Rama temple show that they are modern imitations of the inverted lotus type of corbels of the Simhachalam temple. Building temples as they were in the later half of the 17th century, they could still attract masons (*sthapatis*) who could build walls

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<sup>40</sup> A.R.E. 1910, II, para 64

<sup>41</sup> S. I. I. Vol. V, No. 1312

<sup>42</sup> S. I. I. Vol VI, No. 1184



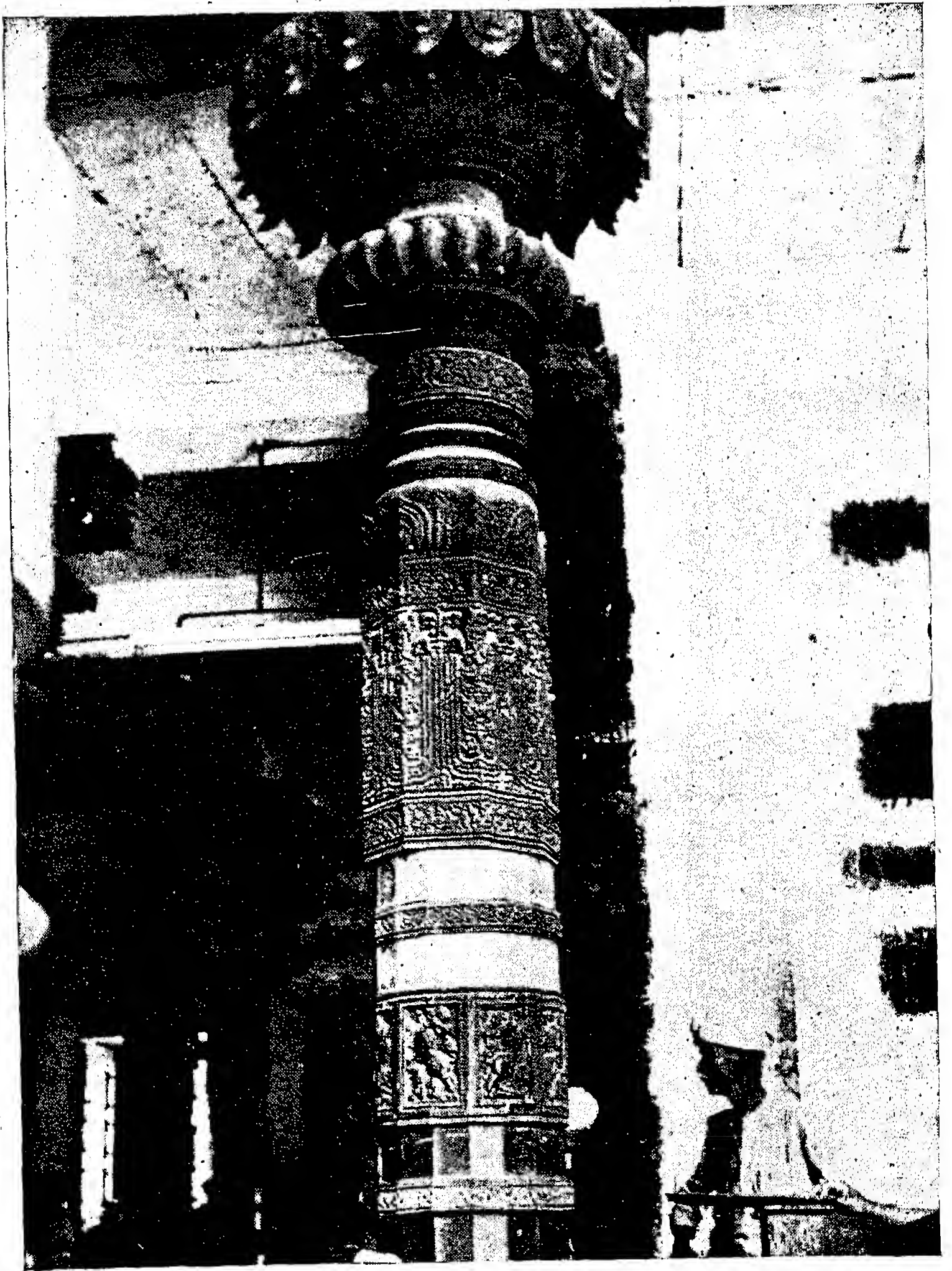


Fig. 14: A Pillar in the Porch in front of Mukhamandapa  
(Kappasthambhamu)

which resembled the walls of the medieval times built in ashlar masonry.

The enclosure on the western side of the temple with its small porch appears to be the work of earlier *zamindars*. The pillars of the porch are partly modern and partly old. The wall on either side of the entrance gate differs considerably from the walls of the other sides and has battlements. The wall has a cornice decorated with creeper scroll with intervening *kirtimukha* designs. On this coping crests of *kirtimukhas* (3' × 2') with insets of animals are placed; these are however broken now. At first sight these walls could be mistaken for very old ones. But the stone used for the construction of the wall is not granite, a material which the medieval craftsman could easily handle, but khondalite. Besides the craftsmanship betrays an inferior quality. On a comparison of the wall with the temples built under the patronage of the early *zamindars* of the Pusapati family, it can be stated that this wall is also a modern imitation of older types of construction.

THE WORK OF THE EARLY ZAMINDARS: A creditable work of the early *zamindars* was the construction of a *mandapa* near Gangadhara, a shrine to house the Alvars and a *mandapa* at the temple. They skilfully used the remains of the earlier temples, notably the shafts of broken pillars, and fitted them into these structures. The adoption is so realistic that one may mistake them for very old ones. But on close examination the pillars reveal certain peculiar features. Firstly, the shafts are of granite while the capitals are of khondalite variety. Secondly, the craftsmanship of the capitals betrays inferior quality. Thirdly, the size of the corbels is much less when compared with the capitals of the early temples of medieval Kalinga, namely Mukhalingesvara temple and Bhimesvara at Mukhalingam and Kurmesvara at Srikurmam. Fourthly, the corbels of the pillars are not uniform in shape. Thus in the Alvar shrine one of the corbels is bevelled and the other, a plain one. These points indicate that the capitals of the pillars are modern imitations of an older variety. The early rulers of the Pusapati family are responsible for planning and executing these improvements. They made the Gangadhara what it is today, a sacred *tirtha*, by installing the image of

Narasimha just on the spot where the spring falls, and erecting the Sitaramaswami temple by the side of the spring.

THE FURTHER WORK: The contacts between the Pusapati family and the temple grew when the family moved to Vizianagaram early in the 18th century and became a powerfull one in the Visakhapatnam District. They became trustees of the temple; and in A.D. 1790 the reigning chief Viziaramaraju II donated 14 villages to the temple for its maintenance. Further additions and improvements were made, and renovation of the tower of the central shrine was taken up. The Bhogamandir and the Sayanamandir in the frontal porch, the Lakshmi Sannidhi in the wall of the cloister and the *Jyestha mandapa*, and the *Ashada mandapa* outside the compound were added as adjuncts to the temple. The enclosure walls and the gateways on the entrance and on the northern gates were constructed, and efforts were made to improve the village. They not only erected the flight of steps leading to the *kshetra* from the foot of the hill, but were responsible for channelling the water supply to irrigate the fields and plantations. Under the patronage of the *Zamindars* of Vizianagaram of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Simhachalam temple developed into a popular *kshetra*, with Hanuman and Bhairava as gate-keepers (*dvarapalas*) and Tripurantaka as the protector of *kshetra* (*kshe-trapalaka*). The hill top thus became a small temple village, and the Devasthanam offices and choultries slowly came into being. Infact every modern structure on the precincts of the temple owes its origin to the Pusapati Zamindars.

### *The Second Raid*

According to a Telugu work *Simhadri Narasimha Satakamu* written by Gogulapati Kurmanatha Kavi, who flourished in the 18th century, the temple was invaded by Muslims. The account no doubt contains some myth. Finding no one to resist the invading hordes, the poet urged the Lord to chastise them. Then the Lord Simhadri Narasimha appeared, and the enemy fled. We are told that the Lord had driven away the invading hordes with a grapeshot of bees. The swarm of bees attacked and chased the foreigners.<sup>43</sup> When we exclude all the myth

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<sup>43</sup> See *Simhadri Narasimha Satakam*. p. 60.

contained in the narrative we are still faced with a question; could the invasion in the 18th century be a historical fact? The patron of this poet was Pusapati Viziaramaraj who ruled between A. D. 1713 and 1757.<sup>44</sup> In A. D. 1753 Viziaramaraj deserted his overlord Jaffer Ally Khan, the *Foujdar* of Chicacole *circar*, to befriend the French. Jaffer Ally Khan sore with the act of the Zamindar, entered into a political compact with a chief of the Marathas. The latter plundered the territories of the Pusapatis in the Chicacole *circar* and retired homewards after capturing much booty. The Telugu work under discussion never refers to the Marathas. It describes the invading hordes variously as the Turushkas or Yavanas or Mussalmans! No other attack on the place during this period is anywhere indicated. It is quite possible that in the course of this plundering raid a contingent of Muslim army raided the temple to wreak indirect vengeance on the *raja* under whose patronage the temple was flourishing. The Hindu *raja* must have been helpless. And when the Muslims deserted the field, the relieved could attribute it only to the intercession of the Lord who hearkened to the impassionate poesy of Kurmanatha.

### *The Modern Renovation*

The most important event that occurred during the last two centuries is the renovation of the pyramidal tower of the Vimana. The 13th century builders used soft stone for the upper tiers of the tower; and this appears to have given way as centuries passed. In an effort to prevent further damage, the entire spire was covered with thick plaster. The exact date of this measure cannot be fixed precisely; but, basing oneself on tradition, one can assign it to the last quarter of the 18th century. This, however, proved ineffective, and cracks once again appeared damping the inside of the temple whenever it rained. The spire over the *mukhamandapa* also cracked during the course of the present century. Both these towers have been plastered once again with cement mortar without materially altering the original design.

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<sup>44</sup> See Introduction to *Vismrta Kalingandhrakavulu*.

# Functionaries and Management

The elaboration of temple ritual and of its functionaries is one of the important developments of the religious life of South India starting from the 9th century. During this epoch, the physical dimensions of temples began to increase, and, corresponding to the growth in size, there was also an increase in the acquisition assets, in the procedure of ritual and in the employment of functionaries. This growth is clearly attested to by the numerous inscriptions incised on the walls of medieval temples which register endowments for not only *archana*, and *anga ranga bhoga* of the Lord but also for the various functionaries of the temple (*nibandhakandru*).<sup>1</sup> The inscriptions of the Srikurmam, the Simhachalam, the Daksharama and the Tirupati temples, illustrate this aspect in no uncertain terms.

The functionaries of the temple employed by the Devasthanam at present, even though the system of management is a modern one, still recall their counterparts in the remote past. The most important document of the modern period which gives a comprehensive list of the functionaries engaged in the service of the temple in the year 1834 is a statement prepared by Kasturi Appayapantulu, the *Seristadar* of the Collector of Visakhapatnam.<sup>2</sup> For the sake of historical study, the functionaries can be classified under three categories : (1) those who are connected with the ritual and religious services, (2) those who are engaged in supervisory and administrative functions, and (3) others who

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<sup>1</sup> (a) *Anga bhoga* includes all the services performed to the Lord for his physical enjoyment and *ranga bhoga*, the recitals of dance and music performed in front of the Lord for his emotional satisfaction (See S. I. I. Vol. X, No. 334).

(b) The general name applied to the men engaged in various services connected with the temple in the inscriptions of the medieval times is *nibandhakarru*, *nibandhakandru* (S.I.I. Vol. X, No. 268).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I.



perform miscellaneous functions pertaining to the various aspects of the life of the temple.

Before examining the various offices two general features have to be noted. Firstly most of these offices have been held on hereditary basis. Though today this is not a matter of right, if there is a suitable candidate in the family, he gets preference to the vacancy caused by the retirement of a member of the family. In recent years, however, a number of families are relinquishing the temple service making their younger generation seek modern education and a different kind of employment. Another feature is the payment in kind. These functionaries were paid entirely in kind by shares in the consecrated food (*prasada*) and endowments of lands. At present these are paid in cash.<sup>3</sup> However the functionaries of the higher cadre receive, besides the usual salary, a share in the Rajabhoga (*Kattadi*).

### I. Religious Functionaries

**PARIKSHAGHAR:** The Highest religious dignitary of the Simhachalam Temple is the *parikshaghar*. He hails from one of the important Vaishnava families of the place, the Tirumala Peddinti family. The main duty of the *parikshaghar* is to see that the daily ritual, special service and the *visesharchana* and festival-service are performed in accordance with the injunctions of the religious texts, maintaining the best traditions of the past. He also supervises over the distribution of the *prasada* among various functionaries of the temple. He is also one of the *pandits* of the temple and reads chapters from Ramanuja's *Sribhasyam* daily after the completion of the morning services of the temple. The *parikshaghar* is an honorary teacher of Sanskrit in the Agama Pathasala maintained by the temple.

The office of the *parikshaghar* is not to be found in all the temples of Andhra.<sup>4</sup> Only at the *Srikurmam* Temple and at

<sup>3</sup> Payment in cash was introduced in the second quarter of 19th century when the temple was temporarily under the supervision of the District Collector. Even today the local people cherish Kasturi Appayapantulu, the Seristadar of the Collector, as the person who was responsible for introducing money payment.

<sup>4</sup> The corresponding office in other temples of Andhra is the '*sthana-pati*'. See S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 200.

the Simhachalam Temple, the *parikshaghar* heads the religious staff of the temple. These two temples situated at the northern extremity of Andhra were for a long period under the political and cultural influence of the Gangas, a dynasty which had its moorings in Orissa. The genesis of this office, like most of the offices of the temple, has to be traced to the administrative arrangements which the Gangas introduced. The inscriptions of the temple when closely analysed and related dilate on the origin and development of this office.

The term *parikshaghar* must be a modern corruption of the medieval office of the *bhogapariksha*, attested by the inscriptions hailing from the temple. Like the *parikshaghar*, the *bhogapariksha* was the religious head of the temple. He was also the superintendent (*adhiikari*) of the temple. The earliest inscription to refer to the office of *bhogapariksha* is dated S. 1229 (A.D. 1307).<sup>5</sup> Another inscription of S. 1281 (A. D. 1359) offers a clue to the nature of this office. It states that one Narasimha Bharati was acting as *bhoga pariksha* of the temple when the area was under the jurisdiction (*veharana*) of an officer of the Gangas, described as Kalinga pariksha. Thus the word *pariksha* refers to the designation of a supervisory officer in the administrative system of the Gangas.<sup>6</sup> A *bhogapariksha* is thus a person who supervised over the ritual of the temple. The emergence of this office shows the direct influence of the administration of the Gangas on the temple.

Inscriptions from the temple mention the following names of persons who successively acted as *bhogaparikshas*: Varadagiri Sripadalu, Narasimha Bharati Sripadalu, Jagannadha Tirtha Sripadalu, and Raga Bharati Sripadalu.<sup>7</sup> Their very names indicate that they were Madhva Saints. The reason for appointing Madhva Saints is not far to seek. The kings of the Ganga

<sup>5</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1,000.

<sup>6</sup> Supervisors of the Ganga Administration are called *parikshas*, for example, *dvara pariksha* (Door Examiner) *puro pariksha* (Examiner of Accounts). See R.D. Banerji, *History of Orissa*, Vol. I, p. 285.

<sup>7</sup> Varadagiri Sripadalu figures in four inscriptions ranging from A. D. 1299 to 1305 (S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 941, 1179, 1000 and 7407) and Narasimha Bharati in another four ranging from 1356 to 1362. (S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 894, 1047, 860 and 858). S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1025 of the year 1373 and 859 of the year A.D. 1390.

dynasty – Bhanu Deva I (A. D. 1264–78) and Narasimha II (A. D. 1278–1305) had intimate connections with Narahari Tirtha, a religious leader of the times. Inscriptions from Sri Kurmesvara Temple, bear out that he acted as a minister to Bhanu Deva I and Narasimha II.<sup>8</sup> In the later part of his life, he took to ascetic orders. Under the influence of Sri Madhva, Narahari Tirtha was converted to the Madhva faith and was raised to pontifical status at Udipi.<sup>9</sup> Before he had risen to the high office, he left a legacy of Madhva teachers to guide and propagate the religious affairs of the Simhachalam Temple and the Kurmesvara Temple.<sup>10</sup> From these facts it can be inferred that the kings of the Ganga dynasty because of their association with Narahari Tirtha created this office of *bhoga pariksha*, so that the successive Madhva saints could not only supervise the religious matters but pray for the welfare of the royal family and kingdom.

Now, when was this office taken over by the Srivaishnava families? This change must have occurred at the end of the 14th century. No inscription mentions a Madhva saint after 1390. On the other hand, a new Vaishnavite movement was in progress during the later half of the 14th century throughout the region of the coastal Andhra, from Nellore in the South to Simhachalam in the North.<sup>11</sup> It was during this epoch the 'illustrious families like the Bhattars, the Kandadais and Tirumalais came and settled in coastal Andhra country.<sup>12</sup> These families belonging to the Tengalai sect propagated the Vaishnava faith with great fervour.

<sup>8</sup> S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 1233 ; E. Ind. Vol. VI, pp. 260-8.

<sup>9</sup> *Madhwa Vijaya Kavya* of Narayana Pandita and *Narahariyati Stotra*. See also E. Ind. Vol. VI, p. 264.

<sup>10</sup> See S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 1174 and S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1025.

<sup>11</sup> The 14th century was a landmark in development of Vaishnavism in South India. It was divided into two sects, the Vadaghalai (the Northern School) and Tengalai (the Southern School). The Vadaghalai sect headed by Venkatanatha stood as a champion of orthodoxy, of the supremacy of the Brahmins and of Vedic religion. The Tengalai, on the other hand, believed in a cosmopolitan outlook preached by Ramanuja, and gave importance to the Dravida Veda. Both the schools vied with each other in propagating Vaishnavism in Andhra, in an effort to meet the challenge which Islam offered to the country.

<sup>12</sup> See M. S. Sarma, *The History of Reddi Kingdoms*, p. 314.

The Tirumalai family, as attested by the inscriptions, settled in Guntur District under its teacher Tirumala Nallandi Chakravarti.<sup>13</sup> The Bhattar family under the leadership of Parasara Bhatta settled at Korukonda (East Godavari District). The Korukonda inscription of S. 1275 (A.D. 1353) and Srirangam plates of Mummadi Nayaka inform us that the local chief of the place, Mummadi Nayaka, took to Vaishnavism under the influence of Parasara Bhatta and erected a shrine dedicated to Narasimha, the favourite deity of Parasara Bhatta.<sup>14</sup> Mummadi Nayaka, the chief of Korukonda, figures in the Simhachalam inscriptions.

That the Simhachalam temple was affected by the new Vaishnava movement can be known from an inscription of A.D. 1364 which mentions one Kandada Ayyangar as the teacher of Mummadi Nayaka, the chief of Korukonda.<sup>15</sup> Since this chief was already a devout Vaishnava, it is reasonable to conclude that this Ayyangar hailed from the great Kandadai family, and that Mummadi Nayaka after the death of Parasara Bhatta might have taken him as his new *guru*. Against this background of the Vaishnavite upsurge, we can conclude that this office of *Parikshaghar* might have passed into the hands of the Vaishnava *gurus*. According to the local tradition, there used to be a Jiyar Matha at Simhachalam, and Vaishnava Jiyars managed the temple affairs for a long time. Thus Vaishnava Jiyars must have held this office of *bhoga pariksha* soon after the Madhva saints.<sup>16</sup>

Now, when was this office of *bhoga pariksha* transformed into *parikshaghar*? The available evidence shows that this transformation was a relatively modern affair owes its origin to the *Zamindars* of Vizianagaram. They appointed secular officers like *havaladar* and *peshkar* to maintain order and peace and

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<sup>13</sup> Inscriptions from Rompicherla and Karempudi (in Guntur District) mention Nallanda Chakravarti and his son Nallanu Govinda Chakravarti. See A. R. E. No. 300 of 1915, No. 556 of 1909.

<sup>14</sup> Korukonda Pillar inscription of Saka 1275 (S. I. I. Vol. X, No. 554) and Srirangam plates of Mummadinayaka (E. Ind. Vol. XIV, pp. 85-88).

<sup>15</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 841 of S. 1286.

<sup>16</sup> The last person to be mentioned as *bhoga pariksha* is one Parasurama Jiyana (S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1091 and 1048 dated in S. 1343 and 1345, respectively). The word Jiyana may be a corruption for the word Jiyar.





Fig. 15: Details of a Pillar in the Assembly-Hall



financial stability of the temple. The office of the *bhoga dariksha* was given an Islamic slant and was converted into *parikshaghar*. His status was reduced to a subordinate position, and his activities were restricted to the supervision of the ritual.

The antiquity of the present family of *parikshaghars*, like that of many other families residing at Simhachalam, goes back to the 18th century. They appear to have held this office since the commencement of Pusapati authority over the temple. This family is related to the Tirumala Peddinti family of Ramathirtham who acted as the priests to the Vizianagaram Zamindars. On the floor of the assembly-hall of the temple, there is an inscription of 1891 which records the names of five generations of *parikshaghars* starting from Peddinti Venkatacharyulu.<sup>17</sup> This Venkatacharyulu is considered to be the *Mulapurusha* of the family and the scions of Venkatacharyulu are now holding the office of *parikshaghar* at present.

Thus we can see that the office of the religious head of the Simhachalam Temple is a relic of the medieval times. The designation of *bhoga pariksha* was first introduced by the Gangas and later converted into that of *parikshaghar* in modern times. The change of the name, however, is not as important as the change in the power of this office. The *bhoga pariksha* of the medieval times was the superintendent of the temple.<sup>18</sup> He had absolute right to regulate the affairs of the temple. In spite of the supervision of a secular authority, he was the custodian of the temple. But today the *parikshaghar's* duty is confined to strictly religious affairs. The general administration of the temple—control over finances, staff etc.—is transferred to secular cadres. During the modern period, the office has lost its original halo. But on occasions like the celebration of important festivals the *parikshaghar* shines with

<sup>17</sup> The inscription gives the following genealogy :

Peddinti Venkatacharyulu  
Sri Venkateswaracharyulu  
Appalacharyulu  
Sri Venkateswaracharyulu  
Narasimbacharyulu  
Venkateswaracharyulu (1891)

<sup>18</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1000 and S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1047.

his original lustre reminding us of his ancient glory.

STHANAPATI: The highest dignitary and custodian of the temple in any shrine is the *sthanapathi*. Every temple used to have such an office. In the Simhachalam temple, the *parikshaghar*'s office includes this function. The *sthanapathi*, as the highest dignitary and representative of the trustee has to start every proceeding of the temple. In the Vishvaksena puja, performed in the mornings, he receives the *akshatas*. In the Kalyanotsava of the Lord, he performs the flag hoisting ceremony, and in the Chandana Yatra, he is the first person to perform both the removal and application of sandal wood paste.

The Tirumala Peddinti family of Ramatirtham acted as the family priests of the Vizianagaram Zamindars from the earliest times.<sup>19</sup> The office of the *sthanapati* of the four temples of the Visakhapatnam District—Simhachalam, Srikurmam, Ramatirtham and Padmanabham—, which have been under the influence of Vizianagaram family, was placed under the care of the Tirumala Peddinti family. But as the members of a single family cannot execute the work all by themselves, they sent their kinsmen to these places as their deputies. In the Simhachalam Temple there used to be until recently a *sthanapati* besides a *parikshaghar*. The two Peddinti Tirumala families residing at Simhachalam used to occupy these important offices of the temple. But when the members of the family which used to occupy the office of the *sthanapati* were reluctant to take up this office, the office was combined with that of the *parikshaghar*.

There is only one inscription (dated in Saka 1275) in the temple which mentions *sthanapati*.<sup>20</sup> While the Srikurmam inscriptions mention specifically the *bhogapariksha* as well as *sthanapati*, the Simhachalam inscriptions refer only to the office of *bhogapariksha* except in the instance which is already cited. An inscription of Saka 1281 (A. D. 1359) informs us that Narasimha Bharati, a *bhogapariksha* of the temple, substituted the service (*kolupu*) of a Sani who had left the place by that

<sup>19</sup> Gogulapati Kurmanatha (1720-90) mentions in one of his works that he was a pupil of Venkataryadesika of the Tirumala Peddinti family of Ramatirtham.

<sup>20</sup> S. I. I. Volume VI, No. 1046 of S. 1275.

of another Sani.<sup>21</sup> This shows that the *bhogapariksha* was in over all charge of the temple administration and acted also as the *sthanapati*. This statement of 1834 does not make any reference to the *sthanapati*.

**PRIESTS:** At present four Vaishnava priests look after the actual conduct of the ritual of the temple. On ordinary days only two priests are seen officiating in the conduct of the worship of the *Mulavirat*. The other two priests take up the work after them either in the evening service of the day or on the next day. Among the four priests, one is the head priest and is assigned the additional task of decorating the Lord with all the ornaments on festivals. The priests who have to be well versed in the Pancharatra Agama hail from such families as Kandadai, Adimatsyam and Godavarti. These are noted throughout Andhra as important Vaishnava families. The statement of 1834 lists out 22 *archakas* who were engaged in the service of the temple receiving an annual salary ranging between Rs. 15/- and 30/-. The list of priests includes the following categories: *archakas*, *paricharakas* and *archakas* of the other temples situated on the premises of the temple.

The earliest inscription to mention *archakas* is dated *Saka* 1195 (A. D. 1273). The *archakas* are described here as *Tiruvaradhana Archakas*.<sup>22</sup> In another inscription of S. 1275 (A. D. 1353) they are described as *Tirupati Srivaishnavas*. Perhaps some of these might have hailed from Tirupati, a Vaishnava shrine which exercised great influence on the spread of Vaishnavism throughout Andhra.<sup>23</sup> Another type of Vaishnava priests mentioned in inscriptions is the *Ekangis* or the priests who had given up married life.<sup>24</sup> *Ekangi* priests also figure in the inscriptions of Tirupati. The origin of this class of priests goes back to the days of the revival of Vaishnavism by Ramanuja. Commenting on the work of Ramanuja, Sadhu Subrahmanya Sastry, an epigraphist of the Tirupati Devasthanam, observes that one of the important phases of his work lay in attaching to each prominent Vishnu

<sup>21</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1047

<sup>22</sup> S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 845.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, No. 1046.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, No. 1008 and 1126.

shrine some acolytes known as Ekangis for rendering service in them.<sup>25</sup>

**PRIESTS OF MINOR TEMPLES :** Four Vaishnava priests are at present engaged by the Devasthanam to perform the ritual in the following minor shrines: the Hanuman Sannidhi and Tripurantaka Sannidhi which are situated on hill, and the shrines of Venugopala Swamy and Mallikharjuna which are at Madhavadhara.

The priests of the minor temples are described as Nambyars or Samaradhaka Brahmins. An inscription of 16th century refers to the installation of an image of Hanuman and announces an endowment for the person who worships the Lord (*Devara Pujachese Namyarki*).<sup>26</sup> Here the term is used as a synonym for "priest".<sup>27</sup> The *paricharakas* must have also been Srivaishnavas. In medieval times there used to be another minor shrine. This is the Vaikunthanadha shrine situated on the northern cliff. The ritual of the temple, which consisted mainly of offering *Dipa*, *Dhupa* and *Naivedya*, was entrusted to some Brahmins living on the precincts of the temple.<sup>28</sup> These are described as the Samaradhaka Brahmins.

**ASSISTANTS TO THE PRIESTS :** Four Vaishnava *paricharakas* are today employed to assist the priests engaged in conducting daily ritual. Their main duties are to clean the vessels utilized in the conduct of the ritual, to bring water from the spring in the kitchen, and to collect all the objects needed for the ritual. A *paricharaka* has to arrange all the essentials before the actual ritual could begin. They receive a monthly salary Rs. 100/- and two Kattadis of consecrated food.

The earliest inscription to mention *paricharakas* is dated Saka 1272 (A.D. 1350). In it the *paricharakas* are referred to as 'Nambyalu' *Paricharakulu*.<sup>29</sup> Since 'Nambyalu' is a general designation applied to all the *archakas*, the *paricharakas* were known as *Nambyalu paricharakulu*. Another inscription of the same year mentions that four persons were engaged in bringing

<sup>25</sup> T. T. D. Epigraphical Report, p. 89.

<sup>26</sup> S. I. I. Vol. IV, No. 699.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, Nambiyar (one who performs *puja*) is a Tamil word derived from *nambu*, meaning *puja*.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, No. 904.

<sup>29</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1052.

water for the Holy Bath of the Lord.<sup>30</sup> The duties of the *paricharakas* even in the medieval times were to assist priests just as they do now.<sup>31</sup> In the enumeration of the *nibandhanas*, they are third in order, the first two being the *bhoga pariksha* and the *archaka*.<sup>32</sup>

THE READING OF DRAVIDA PRABANDHA: A pandit styled as Bhagavat Vishayam Pandit, and six *adhyapakas* recite the *Dravida Prabandha* every day. The songs sung by the twelve Alvars in praise of Lord Vishnu and his divine sport (*lila*) designated collectively as *Divyaprabandha* or *Nalayiraprabandha*. The most important are the songs composed by Tirumangai Alvar, and Tiruvoimorri, written by Nammalvar. The *adhyapakas* as well as the *pandit* belong to the Vaishnava families of Simhachalam. The statement of 1834 mentions that as many as 25 *adhyapakas* were employed by the temple, and that they received an annual salary ranging from Rs. 15/- to 30/-.

The reading of *Dravida Prabandhas* in the Vishnu shrines of Andhra was a practice coming down ever since 11th century. Though the inscriptions of the Simhachalam temple do not refer to the reading of the *Dravida Prabandha*, inscriptions from other temples register endowments for the reading of Tiruvoimorri (*Tiruvoimorri Vinnapamu seyu variki*).<sup>33</sup> This practice probably prevailed also from its inception.

THE READING OF VEDA: Seven *pandits* are today employed for the recital of the Vedas. Of these, two specialise in the Rigveda, two in the Samaveda, and three in the Yajurveda. One among the three specialising in the Yajurveda, also performs the additional duty of reading the Vishnu Purana. Though most of them belong to the Vaishnava sect, yet the Rigveda pandit is a Saivite. The statement of 1834 lists that three *pandits* were employed by the temple to recite the Vedas.

The reading of the Veda was cultivated from the very beginning of the existence of the temple. An inscription prior to the

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, No. 932.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, No. 699 mentions a priest and the person who assists him by bringing flowers and water.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, No. 876.

<sup>33</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 66 from Narayana Swami temple at Bhimavaram (East Godavari) dated in the 30th regnal year of the Chalukyan king, Vikramaditya (A. D. 1076-1126).



date of renovation registers an endowment for the teachers engaged in the *adhyayana* of the Yajurveda.<sup>84</sup> The most important inscription, however, is the one dated Saka 1213 which informs that Narayana Senapati instituted *nibandhanas* for Brahmins engaged in the recitation of the Yajurveda and the Rigveda.<sup>85</sup>

PARAYANADARS: Six *parayanadars* are employed to-day to read chapters from the Bhagavata, the Bharata and the Ramayana on every morning. The temple also supports a *bhagavatar* for the reading of the *paranas* and *itihisas*. A band of 52 *parayanadars* were in the service of the temple in 1834. This shows that *purana pathana* (recital of *purana*) received a good deal of encouragement at that period. Some of the *parayanadars* might, however, have attended other functions like the conduct of the Rudrabhishekam at the shrine of Lord Tripurantaka.

The reading of all the *puranas* and *itihisas* is mentioned in the inscription of Saka 1213 (A. D. 1291) already alluded to.<sup>86</sup> A number of endowments were made in the 14th century for the reading of the *purana*.<sup>87</sup> An inscription of the same century mentions a *bhagavatar* by name.<sup>88</sup>

RUDRABHISHEKAM AND VAYUSTUTI: The conduct of the Rudrabhishekam in Tripurantaka Sannidhi and Vayustuti in Hanuman Sannidhi are performed daily in the morning. Since eleven persons are required for the conduct of the Rudrabhishekam, some of the *parayanadars*, *adhyapakas* and *pandits* are required to do this as their additional duty.

The Tripurantaka Sannidhi and the Hanuman Sannidhi have come into existence only in the 15th and 16th centuries; hence the inscriptions make no mention of the conduct of Rudrabhishekam and Vayustuti in these shrines.

RECITAL OF SAHASRANAMA' NARASIMHA KAVACHA AND PURUSHA SUKTA: Inscriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries register special endowments for the recital of the Sahasranama or the

<sup>84</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1177 of the year Saka 1123.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. No. 904.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, No. 904.

<sup>87</sup> Endowments for *purana pathana* are mentioned in the following inscriptions: No. 904, 1053 and 729.

<sup>88</sup> Endowments for *purana pathana* are mentioned in many inscriptions; No. 967 mentions Kesava Bhagavata.

recital of thousand Sacred Names of the Lord' the Narasimha-kavacha or prayer to the Lord for the protection of all limbs of the body and the Purusha sukta.<sup>39</sup> There are no special functionaries for these at present. The Purusha Sukta is chanted daily at the time of the *tirumajjana* of the Lord. The *Pushparchana* is performed daily with the chanting of the *Sahasranama*. Though the Narasimha *Kavacha* is not chanted at present, the priests in their spare time are required to chant Hymns in praise of Lord Narasimha.<sup>40</sup>

**PREPARATION OF BHOGA:** Preparation of the Bhoga of the Lord is an important task in the temple. At present seven cooks of the Vaishnava sect, one of them being the head cook, are engaged in preparing the *bhoga* of the Lord.<sup>41</sup> There are also two servants to help the cooks. All of them hail from the Vaishnava families of the place. An inscription of Saka 1311 (A. D. 1389) refers to an endowment for persons who cooked the *bhoga*.<sup>42</sup> Another inscription of Saka 1338 registers an endowment for the persons who cooked the *Sribali*.<sup>43</sup>

## II. Administrative Functionaries

**HAVALDAR AND PESHKAR:** The offices are modern creations. The duty of the *havalдар*, who is recruited from the Vaishnava families, is to see that the *archana* is conducted regularly with all the details. He sends to the executive officer a daily report of the day's proceedings. The *peshkar*, being the deputy of the Executive Officer on the temple, controls the entire staff of the temple.

These offices were created by the Vizianagaram Zamindars.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, Nos. 839 and 962.

<sup>40</sup> It may be noted in this connection that the statement of 1834 mentions that five people were appointed to perform *sahasranamapuja*.

<sup>41</sup> The statement of 1834 mentions the names of all the cooks including the Head-Cook (Karoda). The cooks are today described as *Taliha Kainkarya Parulu*. The word '*Taliha*' comes from Tamil, '*Talihai*' meaning a plate in which the food is placed. *Kainkarya* means service, and the word thus stands for those who serve with plates.

<sup>42</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1008, describes the cooks as those who cooked *pappu* (dal) and *payasam* (a pudding made with milk). The items like *pappu* and *payasam* remain even now the chief ingredients of the *Raja Bhoga* offered to the Lord.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, No. 709 mentions *Sribalini vandi pettevaru*.

after they had taken over the administration of the temple. The earliest available document to refer to the offices is the statement of 1834. In this statement, the *havaladar* is described as *majumdar*.

**BHANDARI:** The *bhandari* is incharge of the jewellery, gold and silver ornaments of the Lord. He also keeps under his custody the various clothes used for dressing the Lord, and materials like camphor, incense, cloves, etc. He releases the jewellery and ornaments when they are required by the priests

A *Sribhandaram* with its officer *bhandari* is a regular feature in most of the temples. Inscriptions of the Vaishnavite temples at Tirupati, Bapatla, Srikurmam and Simhachalam refer to this office. The earliest inscription to refer to this office is dated Saka 1218 (A. D. 1290).<sup>44</sup> The importance of this office lay in the fact that in the medieval times all the revenues were placed in the *bhandara*. In modern times, most of the receipts are in cash and are daily transmitted to a bank.

**ACCOUNTANTS:** There are two accountants on the premises to maintain accounts of the various receipts and items of expenditure, and two clerks to sell the tickets for entry, special services and packets of *bhoga*.

In medieval times too the temple used to maintain accountants (*srikanams*). The inscriptions of the Srikurmam temple mention two types of accountants (*karanams*): (1) those who maintained the accounts of the stores (*kosta karanam*) and (2) those who maintained the accounts of the temple (*srikanam*). Even in the Simhachalam inscriptions there is a single inscription of Saka 1203 (A. D. 1281) which mentions a *kosta karanam*.<sup>45</sup> Since the general nature of the administration of the Simhachalam and Srikurmam temples was much the same, it can be safely assumed that the Simhachalam temple maintained both the types of accountants—the *kosta karanam* and the *srikanam*—in the distant past. During the 18th and 19th centuries, confirming to the general pattern of Islamic designations adopted by the Vizianagaram Zamindars, the accountants are described as *musaddis*.

<sup>44</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 982.

<sup>45</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1118.



Fig. 16: Base of a Pillar

—*Courtesy:* Arch. Survey of India



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES DOWN THE HILL: The administrative offices down the hill have grown to enormous dimensions in recent years. The nucleus of the present set-up started at the beginning of this century with an Amin, a Revenue Inspector and a few servants. This set-up has been expanded into a number of branches. The Executive Officer, his ministerial and menial staff form the main unit, and look after the general administration. The Revenue Inspector and his staff are in charge of revenue collection from lands, while the forest officer with his guards and watchers supervises forests. There is a Sanitary Department, a Transport Department and an Engineering Department performing their respective functions. A School for training priests and a high school for others, a dispensary and a cattle-rearing centre—all these are run by the temple.

### III. *Other Functionaries Connected with the Temple*

MUSICIANS AND NATIVE BAND: The temple maintains a Sannayi Melam consisting of 5 players and a Bajabhajantri Melam consisting of 18 persons playing on different indigenous instruments. The Sannayi Melam as the name indicates, specialises on the playing of Sannayi. The members of the other Melam play on the following instruments; a gong (jeganta), four types of pipe, two types of Tiruchurnam, Virakhahala, Gourikahala, four different types of drum (Viranam, Ramadolu, Tamburji and Bheri), a conch, a drone (shruti). The entire music party has to be present at the time of the *suprabhatam*, the *avakasam*, the *dhupa*, the *baliharana* and the *mangalasasana* of the morning *archana* and during the entire time of *archana* in the evening. Whenever the Lord goes round either on the cloister or in the village above the hill, all the members of the music party have to go in the procession playing their respective instruments. The statement of 1834 mentions the names of members of the *Native Band* and players on *Sannayi*. Their salaries varied within the range of Rs. 2/- and Rs. 18/- annually in accordance with their nature of work and service.

Inscriptions of 14th century mention singers as well as players of instruments who entertained the Lord both in the morning



and in the evening service. There was a *dasa* to sing in the presence of the Lord in the musical tradition of Orissa (*Odyā Sampradaya*) from the time of the sacred bath till the offering of incense.<sup>46</sup> There were players of different instruments. It must be noted, however, that both singing and playing instrumental music was in the hands of the females in the service of the temple (*Sanis*). An inscription of *Saka* 1272 (A. D. 1350) acquaints us with a troop of *Sanis*. The troop consisted of female singers, drummers (*meddati kanyalu*), cymbal-players (*kamsyatalam*), players of a big drum (*avarjamu*), a kettle drum (*bheri*), and pipers (*khalivayinchetivaru*). These were to entertain the Lord during the offering of a special *bhoga* instituted by Ganga Devi, queen of Narasimha III.<sup>47</sup>

**DANCERS:** At present no dancers are maintained by the temple, and this art receives no longer any encouragement. But the 14th century inscriptions refer to dancers (*nattuvas*) as well as teachers (*natyacharya*) maintained by the temple.<sup>48</sup> The *Sanis* were well versed in dancing, and in medieval times dancing was cultivated with the same amount of ardour as were other fields of learning.

**GOLDSMITH:** The temple maintains a goldsmith for two practical purposes. The pilgrims place in the *hundi* a number of articles made of gold and silver. After the *hundi* is opened, the goldsmith removes the different pieces from it, and melts them converting them into uniform blocks of metal. Again, the pilgrim after taking a vow to give some or all of the ornaments on his or her person to the Lord, might visit the temple and offer them. In such cases, the presence of the goldsmith is necessary. He can remove the earrings and the noserings of the devotees.

The examiner of ornaments (*uttama sringara parikesha*) mentioned in an inscription of the 15th century must be a goldsmith maintained by the temple in earlier times.<sup>49</sup> The statement of 1834 shows that the temple used to maintain a goldsmith even then.

<sup>46</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 722.

<sup>47</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1052. About *Sanis*, see chapter VIII.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, No. 1091.

<sup>49</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 847.

BOYAS: The temple maintains servants to carry the palanquin of the Lord daily in the *baliharana* and on special occasions including the *varotsava*, the *mosotsava* and the *samvatsarotsava*. They have also to perform several odd jobs connected with the daily ritual and festivals. They have to bring *samidhas* for performing *homa*, arrange the arches at the entrance gates of the different *sannidhis*, and prepare sandal wood paste from pieces of sandalwood. The statement of 1834 reports that 12 Boyas were engaged by the temple. They used to receive an annual salary of Rs. 3/- and a *kattadi*. This class of servants used to be maintained by the temple from very early times. A number of inscriptions bear witness to this.<sup>50</sup>

TORCH-BEARERS: Six torch bearers are employed to carry the torches throughout the evening ceremony starting from the *Divitisalam*.<sup>51</sup> They have to carry the torch when the Lord goes round the temple for the *baliharana* ceremony. Torch-bearers like the party of musicians have to accompany the Lord when he goes round the temple or the village either on a palanquin or on a vehicle. The torch-bearers who received the same salary as that of the *boyas* are required to light the lamps at various places in and around the temple.

Inscriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries mention men who lighted and bore torches (*divyakola patteduvaru*).<sup>52</sup> Three people were performing this function in the year 1834.

SWEEPERS CLEANERS ETC.: Besides the *boyas* and torch-bearers, a washerman, three sweepers, two menials to wash the vessels, two females to clean the different groceries brought for the preparation of *bhoga*, a *kolagari* to measure the groceries, and a sweeper (*satani*) to clean the inside of the temple, are employed by the Devasthanam. There are 12 peons to keep order and to do other chores. The whole staff is supervised by a *kotwal*. These servants belong to different castes, the most conspicuous being the Kapu and the Golla.

The statement of 1834, besides mentioning all the menial staff, enumerates a number of temple servants who are no longer employed. The temple used to maintain an elephant to carry the Lord in procession, on special occasions, and to bring water

<sup>50</sup> As for example, No. 719.

<sup>51</sup> See chapter VII.

<sup>52</sup> No. 936 of Saka 1271.

from the Gangadhara every day for the bathing service of the Lord. Three servants were engaged by the temple to look after this elephant. Now the temple does not maintain an elephant, and hence their services are no longer required. The temple also used to maintain servants for special purposes like announcing time, making garlands, supervising the preparation of sandal wood paste and other similar services. Though these services are still performed by the temple peons, these cadres do not exist at present.

The inscriptions do not mention all these servants. The Kotwal, like the Peshkar and Havaladar, is an officer created by the Zamindars of Vizianagaram. An inscription of Saka 1195 (A. D. 1263) refers to a number of *dasis* engaged to serve the Lord. In the inscriptions of the medieval times only three types of servants of the lower order are mentioned : The *Boyas*, the *Nayakas* and the *Dasaries*.

A survey of the functionaries of the temple reveals that the principal functionaries maintained by the temple—the *archaka*, the *paricharaka* the *bhandari* and the like—are similar to the functionaries maintained by other Vaishnava temples of medieval Andhra. The office of the *parikshaghar*, which does not obtain in any other temple except that of Srikurmam, is an indicator of the agelong contact of the temple with the kings of the Odra country. The rest of the offices like those of the *peshkar*, *havaladar* and *kotwal* are creations of the Zamindars of Vizianagaram. The other administrative officers have been created in the very recent past of the temple. However, the part played by these functionaries in the changing pattern of management from the hoary past to the modern times remains to be explained.

### *Management : Past and Present*

The evidence of the inscriptions of the temple concerning the administrative machinery is scanty. No inscription mentions an assembly (*parished*) disposing of the affairs as a single corporate body. Such being the case a general survey of temple administration medieval South India, enables us to form an idea of the management that prevailed in the Simhaohalam Temple.

In Tamilnad, under the benevolent rule of Cholas (9th to 12th centuries), temples developed an elaborate and efficient system of administration. The administration was run by a committee system which maintained contact with the village assembly. Each sphere of temple administration was looked after by separate committees. A special committee was in-charge of the temple treasury. This committee used to maintain strict accounts of the assets and liabilities of the temples, and the contemporary inscriptions are replete with instances where cases of default in the upkeep of endowments were checked with efficiency.<sup>53</sup> Such a system of elaborate administration did not obtain in the temples of medieval Andhra. The evidence of the inscriptions shows that the temple administration in medieval Andhra was a relatively simple affair.

The inscriptions of the Tirupati temple, the most ancient of the Vishnu Shrines of the Andhra, reveal the fact that there were three important officials at the helm of the affairs of the temple in medieval times: the *sthanattar*, the *adhikari* and *koyil kelvi*.<sup>54</sup> As pointed out by the Devasthanam Epigraphist, the *sthanattar* might have exercised control over all matters related to the temple, the *adhikari* over certain secular matters and the *koyil kelvi* over religious matters. There were accountants (*koyil kanakku*) to record the various transactions, servants (*vasal*) to guard the premises, and goldsmiths (*nottakara*) to take charge of gold and ornaments.<sup>55</sup>

In other temples of the coastal Andhra which flourished simultaneously with the Simhachalam temple, there were some variations worth noting. The inscriptions of the Bhavanarayana Swami temple at Bapatla (Guntur Dt.) mention the *sthanapati*, the *bhandari*, the Srivaishnavas and the Sanis as officials of the temple.<sup>56</sup> The donations made to the Nageswara temple at Chebrolu (Guntur Dt.) were placed under the protection of the *sthanapati*, 300 Ayyalu and 300 Sanis.<sup>57</sup> From some inscriptions hailing from Jaladhisvara temple at Ghantasala (Krishna Dt.), we can find that certain endowments were placed under

<sup>53</sup> A. R. E. 1921-22, para 56.

<sup>54</sup> *Tirupathi Devasthanam Epigraphical Report*, p. 277.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 308-309.

<sup>56</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 200.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, No. 109.

the care of the *nakaramu*.<sup>58</sup> The *nakaramu* was a merchant assembly, and it acted as a village assembly where mercantile interests dominated.<sup>59</sup> The inscriptions of the Srikurmesvara Temple enumerate the following temple officials: the *sthanapati* Srivaishnavas, the *bhandari* and the *karanam*.<sup>60</sup>

From the above examples, certain generalizations about the administration of the medieval temples of Andhra are possible.

(1) The *sthanapati* was the most important official. He was in over-all charge of the entire proceedings of the temple. He appears to have managed the temple with the help of the priests, a treasurer, some accountants and other functionaries. It is not known, however, whether they formed themselves into an assembly.

(2) Though this was the general pattern, in certain areas the *sanis* played an important part in the administration of the temples; while in areas like Ghantasala the village assembly managed the affairs of the temple.

Now, with this general background of the nature of temple management in mind, we can attempt to draw an outline of the system of management of the Simhachalam Temple.

MANAGEMENT IN EARLY TIMES: Inscriptions before the renovation of the 13th century indicate that the entire establishment of the temple was of a modest order, and that the management was a simple affair. Each inscription registers gifts of cash (*mada*) and endowments of land placed in the *sribhandara* of the temple.<sup>61</sup> The endowments were placed under the care of the Srivaishnavas.<sup>62</sup> Thus it was the Vaishnavite priests that managed the *sribhandara*. In short, in the very early days of its life, the temple was managed by those who were responsible for the *archana* and there was neither interference nor participation of any secular authority in the temple administration.

MANAGEMENT UNDER THE GANGAS: The temple grew in stature after the renovation. The successive Ganga kings, their officials and feudatory chiefs endowed the temple liberally. The temple

<sup>58</sup> S. I. I. Vol. X, No. 115.

<sup>59</sup> *Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi*, p. 284.

<sup>60</sup> S. I. I. Vol. V, 1204.

<sup>61</sup> For example No. 1179 of Saka 1123; Devara Sribhanadaramuna nodikina tyagimadalu padi.

<sup>62</sup> 1172-73, yidharmamu Srivaishnava raksha.



acquired a vast amount of property. The establishment of the temple grew considerably large.<sup>63</sup> It was at this stage that something of the Ganga administration crept into the temple management. It is significant that many inscriptions before registering the various gifts and endowments name the officer of the Gangas, the *kalinga pariksha*. Thus an inscription of A.D. 1299 records the information that one Vijayadevapadi Rayulu as the *kalinga pariksha* at Simhagiri.<sup>64</sup> Another inscription of Saka 1281 (A.D. 1359) mentions that under the rule (*veharana*) of a *kalinga pariksha*, Narasimha Bharati was the *bhoga pariksha*.<sup>65</sup> Simhachalam, like Potnuru, acted as one of the political outposts of the Gangas. The successive Ganga kings used to send their officers for periodical inspection.

The officials mentioned in the inscriptions of the Simhachalam Temple correspond closely to those of the Srikurmam temple except in the case of the *sthanapati*. The highest official of the Simhachalam Temple, the *adhikari*, as he is styled in the inscriptions, was the *bhoga pariksha*. The temple must have thus been managed by the *bhoga pariksha* together with the Vaishnava priests, the *bhandari* and the *karanams*. This management was supervised by the *kalinga parikshas* who acted as a liaison between the temple and the royal patrons.

THE WORK OF THE MANAGEMENT: The work of the management consisted mainly of accepting endowments both in cash and kind, and distributing the *vritti* or *nibandhana* of the *prasada* (the specified quota of consecrated food offered to the Lord) to persons for whom the endowment was made.<sup>66</sup> As the remuneration of several persons connected with the temple was in the form of a share in the *prasada*, the job of providing for the shares in the *prasada* constituted an important task of the

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<sup>63</sup> See *infra*, chapter VII.

<sup>64</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1179.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, No. 1047.

<sup>66</sup> Gifts in cash consisted of different types of coins prevalent in these times, and gifts in kind included all types of ornaments, articles made of different metal, different groceries needed for the *bhoga* of the Lord, and lands of different varieties.

(b) Both the words—*nibandhana*... and *vritti*—occur in a number of inscriptions of these times. In Simhachalam Temple the examples are No. 904 and 709.

management. The temple must have maintained a large establishment at the place where the *bhoga* was prepared. However, this was not its only duty. It sold lands to applicants; and some of the transactions it carried on were quite complicated. In S. 1325 (A.D. 1403) one Kunuparaja placed ninety *madas* in the *Sribhanadara*, purchased a piece of land yielding three *puttis* of paddy in a place called Dimile, gave a third of the land to a temple servant, and placed the rest of the land in the hands of the *sribhandara* for the supply of rice for the daily food-offering to the Lord.<sup>67</sup> Transactions of this nature indicate that the temple maintained accounts like those of the temples of the medieval Tamilnad.

This type of management of the *sribhandara* with *bhoga pariksha* at its head continued under Suryavamsa Gajapatis. The inscriptions of the Gajapatis mention all the temple officials of the previous time. Simhachalam continued to be visited by the royal officers, now termed as *mahapatras* of *Kalingadandapatha*.<sup>68</sup> But after the collapse of the Gajapati Empire, the well-established administration of the Hindu kingdoms began to be shaken. That the past grandeur no longer obtained during the later half of 16th century can be inferred from the meagre number of inscriptions belonging to this period. An inscription of Saka 1526 (A.D. 1604) informs us that the worship of the Lord came to a standstill for some years after the collapse of the Gajapati rule, that it was for a short time revived by Mukundadeva (A.D. 1559–65), and that once again for a period of 40 years there was a cessation of all activity in the temple. In the year A.D. 1604, however, Asvaraya, a Hindu officer serving under the ruler of Golkonda, revived the worship gifting away the village Narava for meeting the expenses of *naivedya* and *angaranga bhoga* of the Lord. The temple which owned a great amount of agricultural wealth in all the villages within a radius of 30 miles was now to depend on the proceeds of a single village.<sup>69</sup> One could not have expected that the sanctity of the temple property would be maintained when the territory passed on into the hands of Muslim rulers.

<sup>67</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 865.

<sup>68</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 895 and 1152.

<sup>69</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1184—*nityanaivedyalu tirupalikalu ragabhogalaku ...narava gramamu...samarpana chesiri*.



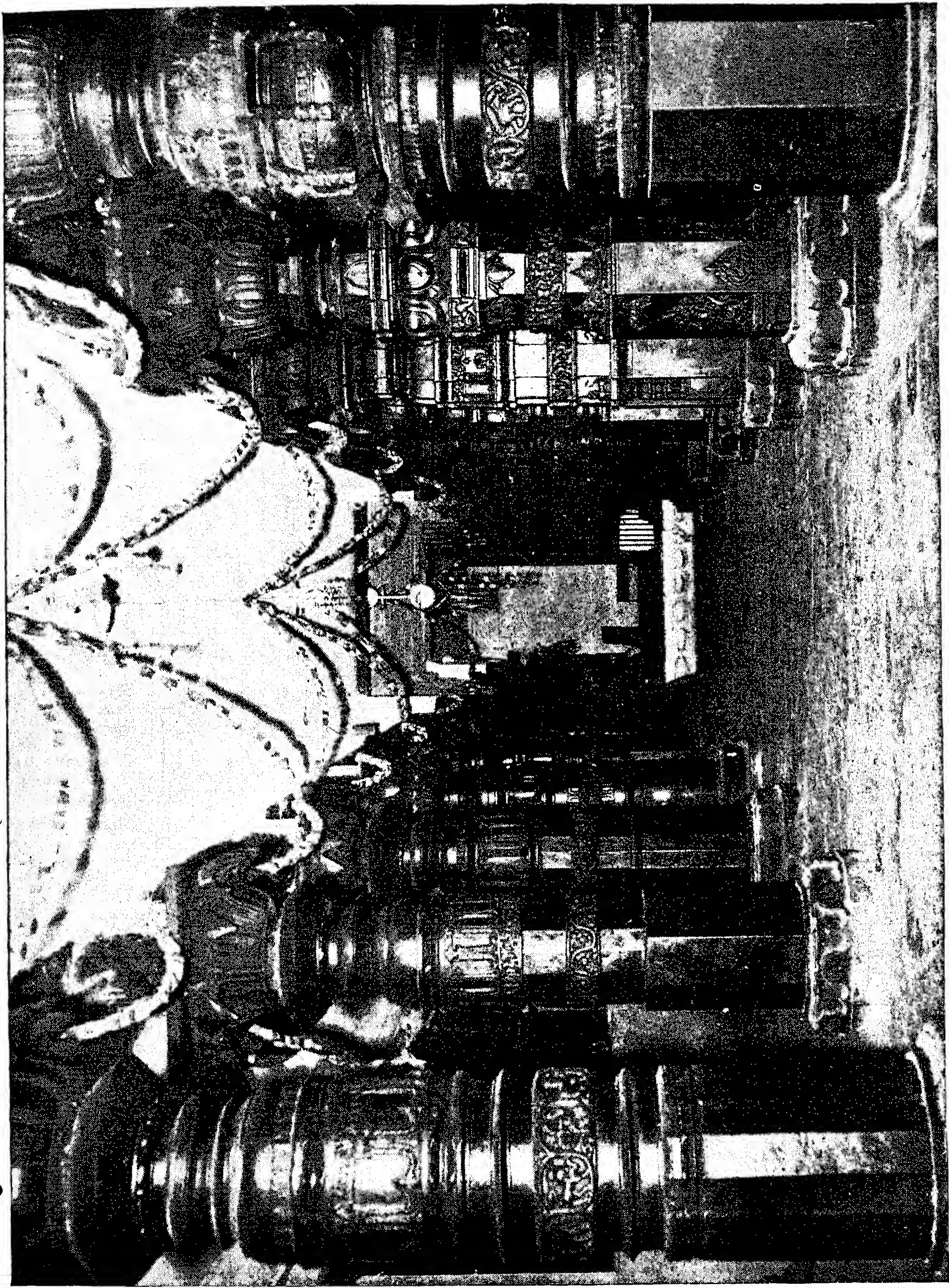


Fig. 17 : Pillars in the Marriage-Hall

Settled administration once again obtained in the Simhachalam Temple only in the 18th century when the Pusapati family took upon itself the management of the temple. The *Zamindars* began to take an active interest in the temple after they had established themselves in Vizianagaram. The work of improvement and renovation that they planned and executed has already been alluded to.<sup>70</sup> In the year 1793, China Vijayaramaraju gave 14 villages for the maintenance of the temple, and these lands formed the main assets of the temple.<sup>71</sup> He also granted *inams* to a number of families engaged in the temple service, and thus placed the fortunes of the temple on a firm footing.<sup>72</sup> The Pusapati family became the hereditary trustees of the temple and managed the temple from Vizianagaram through their officials. Till recently a separate office to look after the affairs of the temple (Devasthanam Office) existed in the Fort of Vizianagaram.

**PUSAPATI ADMINISTRATION:** The Pusapatis served under the Muslim officers of Golkonda and Deccan before it became a powerful family in the Chicacole *Circar*, and thus adopted the Islamic administrative structure in the management of the *Zamindari*. The *Zamindari* was divided into 24 *paraganas*.<sup>73</sup> Each *paragana* had a *thana* situated at the headquarters of the *paragana*. This *thana* or the administrative office was managed by an *amin* with his subordinate officials revenue collectors (*Samuddars*) clerks (*musaddis*) and peons (*masuldars*). These *thanas* were supervised by the *Huzur* office at Vizianagaram headed by the *diwan*.

The temple administration under the Pusapati family was likewise modelled on the lines of the political administration. Under the over-all control of the *amin* stationed at the *Thana* of Pedagadi, the temple was placed under a *peshkar* who carried on the day-to-day administration with the help of his staff. The important officials of the temple were the *majumdar* (later

<sup>70</sup> See supra, chapter V, 120 ff.

<sup>71</sup> The *sannads* granting the lands to the temple are preserved in the Records of the Temple.

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>73</sup> On the eve of the permanent settlement (1802) the *Zamindari* consisted of 834 villages, 73 *mokhasas* and 250 *agraharas*. All these were organised into 24 *paraganas*. (See District Manual).



changed into the office of the *havaladar*) and the *parikshaghar* who looked after the religious life of the temple. The document estimating the expenditure for the Kalyanotsava—submitted to the Government in *Fasli* 1249 (A. D. 1849), though belonging to a later phase, reveals this type of management.<sup>74</sup> The estimate of expenditure was prepared by a clerk of the store-room (*kottu musaddi*) and was certified by the *majumdar*. This was countersigned by the *parikshaghar* and the *peshkar*, and was submitted to the Amin of Pedagadi. While the estate was under the control of the *Rajas*, the Dewan of Vizianagaram supervised the administration through his office at Vizianagram and by periodic inspection. Thus under the Pusapatis, a new transformation in the management took place which requires comment. The religious and traditional cadres of office like the *bhogapariksha*, the *bhandari*, the *srikaranam* and the *archaka* were subjected to the control of secular officers like the *amin*, the *peshkar* and the *havaladar*. Can we find parallels of this type of change in the history of management in other temples? The growth of secular management at Tirupati was necessitated in the 16th century as a result of expansion of the transactions which the temple had to handle.<sup>75</sup> At Simhachalam this transfer of power was the result of the set backs which the temple experienced. There were two raids on the temple involving loss of property. Adequate protection had to be given to the temple to ensure that there would be no recurrence of such incidents in future and at the same time financial status of the temple had to be improved. It was under the circumstances that the Pusapatis affected this change.

The temple administration, being linked with the fortunes of the Zamindari, experienced a number of vicissitudes. After the death of Vijayaramaraju II in A. D. 1794 Narayanaraju was restored by the East India company to the patrimony. Shorn of his military strength and former glory, Narayanaraju experienced a great difficulty in managing the affairs of his estate. Some time during the early part of 19th century he mortgaged the estate and finally handed over the estate to the

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>75</sup> See Burton Stein, 'Economic Functions of a Medieval South Indian Temple', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XIX, p. 174.



District Collector of Visakhapatnam in A. D. 1821 and left for Benaras. The District Collector administered the estate from 1821 to 1848.<sup>76</sup>

COMPANY RULE: Thus for three decades it was the English company that managed the affairs of the temple. Though the Collectors did not change the administrative set-up, they introduced a number of reforms for the smooth conduct of the business of the temple. The documents carefully preserved in the Collector's Office of Visakhapatnam show this phase of the administration. At first the Collector appears to have constituted a committee to enquire into the affairs of the temple.<sup>77</sup> In 1834, the Collector Master Woolmarren deputed his efficient *sheristadar* to prepare a statement fixing the emoluments of the temple staff.<sup>78</sup> The *sheristadar* abolished the *vrittimanyam* and prepared the statement fixing the annual salaries and *kattadis* of the 267 officials of the temple.<sup>79</sup>

The various statements submitted by the temple staff to the Collector enable us to form an idea of the income and expenditure of the temple. The main assets of the temple were its landed estate in 14 villages. The estimated rent from these lands was to the tune of Rs. 16,000/-. An amount ranging between Rs. 2,500/- and Rs. 3,000/- came from auctioning the various sources of income (*guttas*) to the highest bidder.

These sources of income are: (1) the various offerings placed in the *hundi* in the sanctum (Sannidhi Gutta), (2) the various offerings made to the pillar in the temple (Kappastambhamu), (3) the nominal fee collected at the entrance (Sunkabhadramu), (4) the right to sell oil in the temple (Nunebhadramu), (5) the right to cultivate the gardens on the hill (Tota Gutta), (6) the right to open various shops on the hill and down the hill (Bazaar Gutta).<sup>80</sup> The temple also received a number of items needed for the *bhoga* direct from the devotees. The expenditure

<sup>76</sup> See District Gazetteer, Vizagapatam, p. 60 ff.

<sup>77</sup> The statement of 1834 refers to the committee.

<sup>78</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>79</sup> Kasturi Appayapantulu was a noted administrator of the times and was responsible for introducing a number of revenue reforms in the administration of the district. For further particulars of his work, see *District Gazetteer*, p. 161.

<sup>80</sup> See Appendix I.

of the temple including the salaries of the functionaries and repairs amounted to Rs. 16,000/-. The temple was self-sufficient.<sup>81</sup>

VIJAYARAMA GAJAPATI AND ANANDA GAJAPATI: In 1848, the estate was handed over to the Vizianagaram family once again. Vijayaramaraju III (1848-79) and Ananda Gajapati (1879-97) administered the estate for half a century. As the successor of the latter was a minor, and as there was also a dispute about his succession, the then Government of Madras appointed a Collector to manage the affairs of the estate till 1904. From 1904 to 1912 Vijayaramaraju IV administered the estate, but later his physical disability forced him to place the estate under a trusteeship. From 1912 till his death in 1922, the *Zamindari* was managed by Estate Collectors.

TRUST-DEED PERIOD: Certain changes in the administration were introduced during the period from A. D. 1912 to 1922. At the principal office at Vizianagaram the accounts of the estate and those of the *devasthanams* were separated during this period.<sup>82</sup> A separate *amin* was placed in charge of the temple administration. The collection of the revenue from the temple lands was to be managed by a revenue inspector.<sup>83</sup> The system of auctioning the different sources of income was abolished partially; and the administration itself collected all the offerings of the devotees and leased out gardens and bazaars to individuals on a long-term basis. A notable addition to the income of the temple was the fees collected for tonsuring (*puttukoppulu*). During this period, 'the pay and prospects of the Devasthanam servants who received miserably low salaries, were also considerably improved'.<sup>84</sup>

Alakh Narayana Gajapati who acceded to the *gadi* of the Zamindari in 1922, ruled up to 1935. In 1935, the Government intervened once again in the affairs of the estate since it

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> A valuable document of this period is, *Note on the Administration of the Vizianagaram Samasthanam from the Execution of the Trust-Deed, 1913-18*. A printed copy of the same is now available in the office records of the temple.

<sup>83</sup> The records of the temple from this period show the signatures of the temple *amin* and the temple inspector on the official papers.

<sup>84</sup> *Note on the Administration*, p. 19.

received reports of maladministration from the people. The estate was placed under a Court of Wards. The administration under the Court of Wards was run by Estate Collectors. The estate was handed over back to the present *raja*, Sri P. V. G. Raju in 1946, but was sequestered with the Zamindari Abolition Act of 1949. During this phase (from 1922-35) no change in the administrative set-up took place.

**THE PRESENT POSITION:** In the year A. D. 1949, the temple was brought by a special scheme under the purview of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board of the State Government. Under this scheme, the trustee's power of management was delegated to an executive officer. Now the executive officer is in full charge of the administration. His authority is, however, subject to the general control of the trustee, the *Raja* of Vizianagaram and the Commissioner of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Its accounts are annually audited by a Local Fund Auditor. The offices of the earlier administration like that of the *peshkar* and the *havaladar* still continue. The *peshkar*, under the control of the Executive Officer, looks after the administration of the temple, while the *havaladar* takes care of the ritual of the temple. The office of the *parikshaghar* who is now the religious head, is a relic of the medieval times which lingers on to-date.

**THE INCOME:** The temple today derives its income from lands, leases, gifts, donations, forest revenue, the sale of garden produce and its fleet of buses. The temple has now lands in four neighbouring villages. The temple leases out the area up the hill for markets and houses. Likewise, it also gets income from garden and pineapple leases. There are now only two specific endowments for the maintenance of a special *bhoga* for the Lord. The devotees now choose to make their donations in the form of cash gifts. They deposit these in the boxes (*hundis*) kept for this purpose by the administration. The temple derives its revenue from the fees paid for blessings and special *bhogas*, for tonsuring, for performing marriages and for embracing the Kappastambhamu in the temple. The newly acquired fleet of buses also secures a considerable sum of money for the temple. The income of the temple derived from

these sources has been steadily progressing in the last ten years and is now about twelve lakhs of rupees per annum.

EXPENDITURE : The main draw on the temple expenditure is the maintenance of the daily ritual and the ritual on festive occasions and the salaries of the Devasthanam staff headed by the executive officer. The temple expends a sum of a lakh and a half rupees on the maintenance of public institutions. It maintains a school for training the priests, a hospital in Adivivaram and a students' Boarding House at Vizianagaram and contributes to the maintenance of ninety five other temples. A leper asylum is run at Visakhapatnam from the funds of the temple, while an amount of Rs. 5,000/- per annum is donated to the Social Welfare Board. Besides these, the temple contributes a sizable amount to the Telugu Bhasha Samiti, the Andhra Educational Society at New Delhi, the Women's College at Vizianagaram and for other educational purposes. The financial position of the temple is now sound. It maintains a reserve fund of 5 lakhs of rupees to which a sum of Rs. 50,000/- is being added every year.

# The Temple Ritual

The ritual of the Simhachalam Temple does not differ in essentials from the ritual of other Vishnu temples of South India like the temples at Tirupati, Kanchi and Srirangam. Credit for systemization of the temple ritual in shrines dedicated to Vishnu is traditionally given to Ramanuja and his immediate followers like Anandalvan.<sup>1</sup> He is believed to have not only laid down certain procedures of ritual like the reading of the *Dravida Prabandha*, but also installed his own followers to guide the temple ritual in Vishnu shrines all over South India. The veracity of this tradition is borne out by certain common ritual practices in the Vishnu shrines of the South India. Even today the reading of the *Dravida Prabandhas* like the *Tirtuvoimorri* and the *Tiruppavai*, the worship of the 12 Alvars and the celebration of *Adhyayanotsava*, are quite common in the shrines dedicated to Vishnu.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the ritual in the Vishnu shrines of South India is based on one of the two main systems of worship—the Vaikhanasa system and the Pancha-ratra system. The two systems, in spite of minor differences, agree on the basic tenet that (iconic) form is the most important

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<sup>1</sup> Sadhu Suprahmanya Sastri in his T. D. E. Report summarises the work of Ramanuja thus: 'Briefly, the influence of Ramanuja's life-long activities continued in later times in the formulation and systematisation of a detailed code of temple procedure...in the establishment of Ramanuja's disciples and their descendants in the various Vaishnava centres for the propagation of his faith under the appellation of Acharyapurushas.' See *Tirupati Devasthanam Epigraphy Report*, 87 ff. The traditional work, *Venkateswara Itihasamala*, details the work done by Ramanuja at Tirupati. S. K. Iyengar demonstrates the validity of this tradition from the inscriptions of Tirupati. See S. K. Iyengar *History of Tirupati*, 290 ff. It is interesting to see that the Vaishnava priests of the medieval times found in the inscriptions of Simhachalam Temple are described as Tirupati Srivaishnavas. See supra, chapter VI.



form of the Lord since it facilitates the process of surrender (*prapatti*) to him. The Vaikhanasa system takes its name from the sage Vikhanasa, its founder. As observed by Prof. K.A.N. Sastri, "the derivation of Pancharatra (five nights) is uncertain".<sup>2</sup> For, the Pancharatra system is believed to have originated from Narayana himself who is believed to have taught the doctrine to his disciples in five nights (*Pancharatra*) through esoteric way. According to Prof. Schrader, the sect "took its name from its central dogma which was the Pancharatra sattra (Session of Sacrifice) of Narayana interpreted philosophically as the five-fold self-manifestation of God in terms of his *Para* (Highest), *Vyuha* (emnatory), *Vibhava* (incarnatory), *Antaryamin* (inner being) and *Archa* (image) forms.<sup>3</sup> The latest opinion on the subject is that of Prof. V. Raghavan. The Pancharatra should refer, according to him, to the four nights, each of which was devoted to a discourse on Siva, Brahma, Indra, Rishis and Bruhaspati, successively.<sup>4</sup>

The mode of worship of the Simhachalam Temple is in accordance with the Pancharatra system of worship.<sup>5</sup> The ritualistic texts of the Pancharatra system, described as Pancharatra Agamas, consist of 108 *samhitas*.<sup>6</sup> The most important of these *samhitas* are three in number (*ratnatrayam*). They are the *Satvata samhita*, *Paushkara samhita* and *Jayaka samhita*. The

<sup>2</sup> For various explanations of the origion of the word 'Pancharatra', see K.A.N. Sastri, *Development of Religion in South India*.

<sup>3</sup> The philosophic basis of the system is explained at length by Prof. Schrader in his *Introduction to Pancharatra*. See p. 25. The English translation given in between the parantheses is mine.

<sup>4</sup> See V. Raghavan: *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 85, 73ff.

<sup>5</sup> It is accepted by every authority that the origin of the cult goes back to the days of the development of Sattvata or Bhagavata religion, i.e., the early centuries before the Christian Era. See R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor religions*, p. 54 and Das Gupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> The important ritualistic texts of Pancharatra system began to be composed in the 8th & 9th centuries. See, Schrader, *Introduction to Pancharatra*, 6 ff. The Vaikhanasa texts appear to have been composed a little earlier (6th - 8th centuries). T.A.G. Rao considers that the prose version of the Vaikhanasa text as the oldest *agama* text available. See *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, part I, p. 56. The growth of this literature is thus contemporaneous with the development of the Bhakti movement spearheaded by the Alvars. According to tradition, the total number of Samhitas is 108. But as pointed out by Schrader, the actual lists supplied by the available texts enumerate either more or less names and there are still others which are extant or quoted in later literature but which are not mentioned in the texts. Schrader lists as many as 215 different samhitas of Pancharatrins.

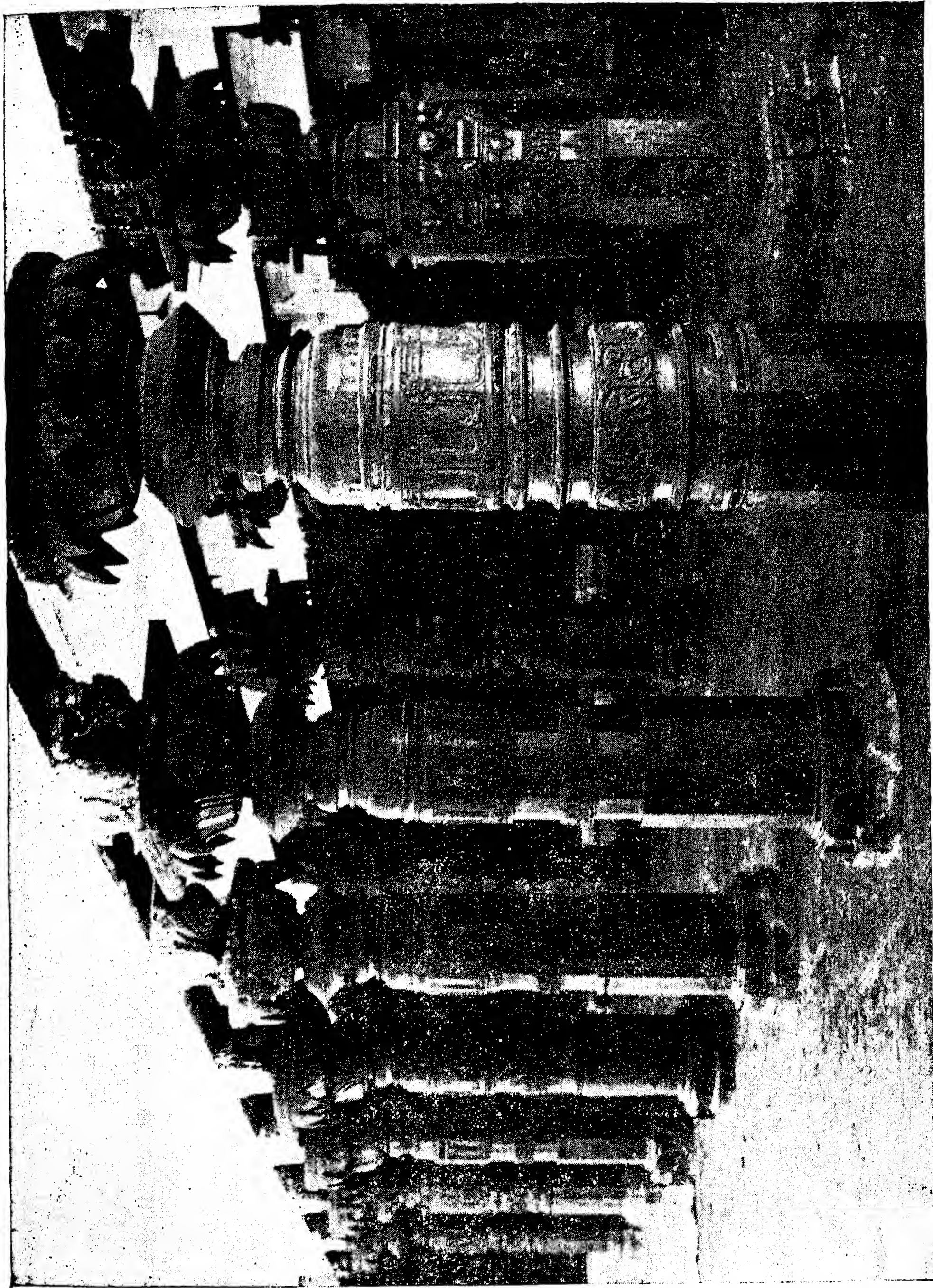


Fig. 18 : Pillars in the Marriage-Hall (Another View)

mode of worship in the Simhachalam Temple is based on the Satvata samhita. The Iswara samhita which is considered to be a commentary of the Satvata governs the conduct of worship of the Lord on festival days. Sometimes on festival days, the priests pressed for time resort to the mode of procedure laid down in *Bharadwaja Samhita* which takes a shorter time to finish. In certain matters, the conduct of worship is based on the modes of conduct evolved by custom (*sistachara*).

Before narrating the procedure of the ritual, it is necessary to elucidate the meaning and character of *puja* or worship as it is practised in Hindu Temples. The development of this type of worship started with the beginning of the *sagunopasana*.<sup>7</sup> The Lord is conceived as a living being with all the good qualities (*saguna*). He receives several services like the offering of incense, lighted lamp and food. Every service is accompanied by chanting of the relevant formula. Thus the offering of incense (*dhupa*) is made along with the uttering of the formulas. The Vedic saying 'that which is felt in the mind expresses itself in speech and is followed by action', appears to be the basis of this procedure.<sup>8</sup>

**THE PURPOSE :** The ritual or rite is 'the constant reiteration of sentiments towards 'first and last things'. Thus the very opening of the temple is done by invoking the cosmic force of

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<sup>7</sup> There has been considerable discussion on the origin of the word *puja*. Etymologically the word is sought to be derived from Tamil in two ways: J. Carpentier derived it from Tamil 'Pusai' meaning 'to smear', while Mr. Collins derives it from 'pu'=flower, plus 'cey'=to do. Prof. K. K. Pillay agrees with the later derivation and concludes that *puja* appears to have been originally a *dravidian* form of worship. (See the Sucindram Temple, p. 206, f.n. 1). Prof. K. A. N. Sastri in his recent work, *Development of Religion in South India*, refutes all this by arguing that the word *pusai* does not occur in Samgam literature, and that the Tamil lexicon makes no reference to these derivations. He adds that the worship is mentioned in the literature of the Sutra period. (See *Development of Religion in South India*, p. 27). In a comprehensive article challenging the view of Carpentier who cannot think of an Aryan origin of 'Puja', Paul Thime demonstrates that such origin is to be considered as highly probable. 'Puja', which originally meant guest-worship, later acquired other uses (See *Journal of Oriental Research*, Vol. XXVII, 1ff). The actual mode of worship shows the influence of the Vedic tradition.

<sup>8</sup> Yaddhi manasa dhyayati, tadvachasa vadati, tat karmana karoti—Yajurveda Aranyaka.



Marut, described in the Hindu scriptures as the visible principle of the Brahman. The services are rendered by invoking the cosmic Purusha. Even when a benediction is given to the devotees, it is given in the name of Prajapati, the cosmic Lord of the universe. By chanting the *mantra* ostensibly to invoke the material form of a particular god, the priest in fact invoking the cosmic principle behind the form. It is believed by the orthodox priests that the rite so performed not only purifies the performer but creates a cosmic force at a particular centre which by diffusion can bring out great happiness in a certain area.

EVIDENCE OF INSCRIPTIONS : The evidence of inscriptions on the mode of *archana* is not as enlightening as one would wish. It enables us to point out the antiquity of the several practices.

### *The Daily Worship*

THE COMMENCEMENT : The daily worship of the deity begins usually about 5-30 a.m. The priests on duty open the gates of the inner temple chanting the formula for invoking the Wind-God (*Vayumantra*).<sup>9</sup> The Wind-God (*Marut*) is considered to be the motive force of all life, and thus with his invocation the life of the temple begins afresh on each day.<sup>10</sup> For about a half-hour, the sleeping gods are woken up gradually by the chanting of the *suprabhatam* and prepared for regular worship.

THE SUPRABHATAM : The *suprabhatam* of any celebrated temple is an anthology of verses almost similar to each other in meaning and tone. They are designed to coax the deity to wake up, and the idea is conveyed to the Lord that he has to condescend to wake up so that he may shower his blessings on the waiting devotees. While chanting these verses designed to wake up the Lord, the priests do the routine chores

<sup>9</sup> The priests on duty wear no special dress while performing the ritual. This is a practice common in all South Indian Temples (See K.K. Pillay, *The Suchindrum Temple*, p. 207. But they must on all accounts tie a piece of cloth around their waist (*nadumu batta*).

<sup>10</sup> Marutah paramatma parangatih param yonih param brahmanah paramatmanamassave yo agni rahamagni vayave, the formula for invoking the Wind-God.

such as the lighting up of the wicks, clearing the flowers and other stale material of the previous day, and cleaning up the entire place and the sacred vessels to be used in the ritual. The chanting of the *suprabhatam* is accompanied by instrumental music outside the frontal porch played by the *Sannayi Melam*.

THE EARLY MORNING SESSION : The sleeping *vigrahas* are then made to stand erect by the formula (*uttishtheti*) and are worshipped in a preliminary fashion (*laghvarchana*). The Lord's presence is first invoked. He is given water for washing hands and feet and for taking in (*acamaniyam*). The incense (*dhupa*) the lamp and the food are then offered to the Lord. While these are offered, music is played once again by the *Sannayi Melam*. The food offering at this juncture consists in presenting a small piece of jaggery and a coconut. The ritual comes to an end with the offering of incense (*mangalaharati*). The early morning *darsan* is given to the few devotees that assemble in front of the frontal porch. They are given the holy water (*tirtha*) styled as *avakasa tirtha* and allowed to see the Lord for a few minutes.<sup>11</sup>

PRELIMINARIES FOR THE ARADHANA : The actual worship commences about 6-30 a.m. and closes at 8 a.m. Certain preliminaries have to be observed before the ritual proper takes place. Vishvaksena, the Chamberlain of the Lord, is invoked and worshipped. He, like Lord Vighnesvara in the Saiva tradition, is the Lord of success and has to confer his benediction on the proceedings of the day. The *parikshaghar* is expected to attend this ceremony and receive the benediction in the form of *akshatas*. This is followed up by a ceremony called the *punyahavachanam*, designed to purify the place trodden by the multitudes indifferent to cleanliness.

THE TIRUVARADHANA : The mode of actual worship consists of sixteen services (*shodasa upachara*).<sup>12</sup> The Lord's presence is first invoked. He is then offered a seat (*asana*) and shortly after is given water for washing feet (*padyam*) and hands (*arghyam*) and for taking in (*achamaniyam*). Next comes the

<sup>11</sup> The *tirtha* that is given in the temple to the visiting pilgrims consists of water mixed with different spices. This is used for the services of the Lord, thus is sanctified.

<sup>12</sup> These are sufficiently put in a well-known sloka.



offering of water for the sacred bath. The presentation of the dress (*vastram*), the sacred thread (*upavitam*), the sandal paste (*gandha*), flowers (*pushpa*) and ornaments (*alankara*) follows the bath. Finally, he is offered the incense (*dhupa*), a lighted-lamp (*dipa*), food-offering (*naivedya*) and betel-leaves (*tambula*). With the performance of obeisance (*namaskara*), the sixteen services are completed.

**THE CONDUCT:** All the services offered to the Lord are performed by the priests by uttering the relevant formula. Thus the Lord is invoked by the chanting of *Murti Mantra* and, in a similar way, the other services are rendered one after another. The sacred bath is interesting. At first the Lord's *snapana bera* is bathed with the Panchamrta.<sup>13</sup> Next, five *pots* are placed before the deity. The guardian deities of the eight directions (*dikpalakas*) are then invoked, and water is poured in these vessels as though these guardian deities brought the waters from the water-expanses (*jalanidhi*) of the four quarters of the earth. Then, as the deity is bathed, the Purusha Sukta and the Niratta Pasura of the Dravida Veda, are chanted.<sup>14</sup> While officiating priests are chanting these verses, the *pandits* start reciting the Suktas and Dravida Prabandha outside the frontal porch.<sup>15</sup> This sacred bath (*tirumanjana*) is followed up by a flower offering, the principal *puja* of the temple. This is performed by the chanting of the thousand sacred names of the Lord. The commencement of the incense offering, is the signal for starting of the reading of the *Veda*, the *Purana*, and the *Itihasa* on the one side, and native music on the other. The food-offering described as the *balabhoga* consists of a kind of fried rice of which the principal ingredients are rice, tamarind and seasoning (*Pulihara*), a rice and gram pudding (*Venupongali*) and a rice and curd pudding (*Dadhojanamu*).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The Panchamrta consists of the following ingredients: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey. See Apte, *Sanskrit - English Dictionary*.

<sup>14</sup> At every important stage, one can notice the combination of Vedic traditional lore with the Dravida one. This increasing prominence given to the *Dravida Sampradaya* and the worship of the Alvars and Acharyas is considered to be an essential feature of the Pancharatra system.

<sup>15</sup> The principal *suktas* are those which praise the manifold qualities of the cosmic being (Purusha), Vishnu and his consorts Sri, Bhu and Nila.

<sup>16</sup> The *Vishnu Samhita* enumerates the ways in which these preparations are to be made.

**BALIHARANA :** The last phase of the *archana* is characterised by a ceremony called *Baliharana*. The offering of a portion of the consecrated food to the spirits is called the *baliharana*. For this ceremony, the image of Chakra Perumal (*Bali Bera*) is taken to the Yagasala situated near the marriage-hall and installed at the appointed place. Thereafter a sacrifice is performed. Into the consecrated fire, sticks are thrown while the Murti Mantra is chanted, and ghee and cooked rice while the Vishnu Sukta and the Purusha Sukta are chanted. Then the Lord is conducted round the temple on a palanquin as the rest of the food is offered to the guardian spirits of the temple. The Lord is accompanied during the ceremony by the entire *parivara* consisting of the Sannayi Melam' the Native Band and the torch-bearers.<sup>17</sup>

**THE LAST PHASE :** The offering of the incense and the recital of the benediction marks the culmination of the proceedings of the morning. While the priests chant the benediction in Sanskrit verse, the teachers sitting outside the frontal porch recite the verses of benediction from the Dravida Veda. The sacred *tirtha* of the Lord and the *prasadam* are distributed among those that are present for the ritual. The outer gates of the temple are then opened for the entry of the pilgrims.

**RITUAL IN OTHER SHRINES :** Simultaneous with the proceedings in the main shrine, the ritual is conducted in the following subsidiary shrines situated on the precincts of the temple: the shrines of Chaturbhuja Thayar, Andal, Lakshminarayana and Alvars. The performance of the ritual in these shrines is once again the same. The preliminary services up to the stage of the incense offering are performed individually to each deity. The incense, lighted vick and food are offered in these shrines in succession after offering them in the main shrine.

**THE MIDDAY WORSHIP :** The Visiting pilgrims have access to the Lord till about 11-00 a.m. Then it is time for offering of the midday food-offering (*Rajabhoga*) to the Lord. The services are once again performed and the Lord is offered *Rajabhoga*. This consists of cooked-rice, dal, soup, cooked vegetables, ghee

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<sup>17</sup> The ceremony of *baliharana* is performed twice a day; that is, at the close of the morning as well as at the time of the evening ritual. On the new-moon day, the Bali is offered in the afternoon also.

and curds. The pilgrims are once again free to see the deity for an hour. Then the Lord is coaxed to take his afternoon siesta. About 2-00 p.m. the deity is once again made to wake up by uttering the wakingup formula and then offered a small quantity of milk. After this, pilgrims are free to see the deity till 6-00 p.m.

**THE EVENING SERVICE:** The evening service commences at 6-00 p.m. with a ceremony called the *Diviti Salam*. The '*Diviti Salam*' signifies a salute with torches, Two temple servants, one bearing the torch and another beating the drum, go round the temple.<sup>18</sup> The priests on duty commence the evening ritual by lighting the lamps. The evening ritual is essentially the same as the morning ritual. The only deviation is the increasing prominence given in it to the singing and instrumental music played by the *sannayi melam* and the Native Band. The night food-offering consists of pudding with milk, rice and jaggery (*Tiruvisam*), fried gram and rice cakes.

**THE LAST PHASE:** The evening worship is followed by the ceremony of putting the Lord to bed (*Sayanaseva*.) While the archakas are engaged in this, the lay devotees sing songs in praise of the Lord. Finally the sacred *tirtha* and *prasadam* are distributed to the few devotees assembled in front of the frontal porch. Now, the day's proceedings are finished and silence descends over the temple premises.

**SPECIAL SERVICES:** The course of worship in a day has been outlined already. The mental resolve (*Sankalpa*) for the worship is done in the name of the trustee of the temple. The visiting pilgrims can institute a special service in their name and sept by paying the prescribed fees. Thus one often finds pilgrims request for services like the chanting of the thousand names of the Lord (*sahasranamarchana*) and the chanting of the hundred and eight names of the Lord (*ashtottaram*). The devotees can also ask for special services like the umbrella-service (*godugu pattu seva*), the fan-service (*Vinjamara seva*) and the vehicle service (*Vahana seva*). These services to the Lord are

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<sup>18</sup> '*Diviti Salam*', as the name indicates is a practice introduced in modern times, as a result of the Islamic influence. Since the practice has no significance of its own, it signifies the sanction of the secular authority to start the proceedings of the evening.

accompanied by utterances of the requisite formulae. Thus, for example, the service of holding umbrella for the Lord, the formulae entreats the Lord to give protection to all by his glorious shade.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Festivals of the Lord*

The conduct of the daily proceedings differs naturally from the festivals (*utsavas*) of the Lord.<sup>20</sup> The *utsavas* of the temple are many. They are usually divided into two categories. Those that are sanctioned by the *agama* texts and those evolved by custom (*sistachara*). The Kalyanotsava, Chandanayatrotsava and certain others have the sanction of ancient texts, while the *Dhanurmasotsavas* and Kamadahansotsava have their roots in custom. Apart from these annual festivals, there are a number of minor festivals described as weekly festivals (*varotsavas*) monthly festivals (*masotsavas*). The most important among the annual festivals are the Kalyanotsava and Chandanayatrotsava. They are celebrated on a grand scale involving an expenditure of thousands of rupees.<sup>21</sup>

**KALYANOTSAVA:** This occurs on the 11th day in first half of the lunar month of Chaitra corresponding to the month of March and extends over a period of 5 days, that is, from the 11th day (Ekadasi) to the full-moon day (Purnami). This can be described as the *mahotsava* of the temple since it includes the celebration of the principal items in the procedure of *mahotsavas* celebrated in most of the temples of South India. These are: (1) the sowing of seeds (Ankurarpana), the hoisting the flag (dhvajarohana), the pleasure ride of the Lord on the chariot (rathotsava), the purification ceremony (avabhrata snana) the rewarding a devotee (bhaktotsava) and the putting the Lord to bed (sayanotsava). As the name indicates, this ceremony

<sup>19</sup> Prajapateh saranamasi, brahmanah chaturvidha janasya chayasi, sarvatomapasi.

<sup>20</sup> As observed by J. Gonda, 'The idea that festivals are invigorating and strengthening actions' offers the key to the Sanskrit word. 'utsave' means festival or joy. (See Indian Antiquary, Vogel Commemoration Volume, p. 147).

<sup>21</sup> The statement of expenditure for the year 1834 shows that Rs. 922 and 983 were spent respectively for the Kalyana and Chandanayatra of the temple. Even then, in comparison with other festivals, these two involved a large expenditure.

celebrates the *kalyana* of the Lord, and thus resembles the wedding that one sees in Hindu families.

The preliminaries of the function start even from the evening of the Dasami (10th day of the fortnight) when the important ritual of the sowing of seeds takes place. The marriage-hall is made ready for the function and the soil, needed for the *anku-rarpana*, is brought from a chosen place. This is placed in the nine sacred earthen pots. Then the *Astadikpalas* and the Creator of the Universe (Brahma) are invoked by chanting the hymns; and nine kinds of seeds are sown in the earthen vessels. The actual ceremony involves the offering of the germinating seeds to gods who are responsible for the creation and sustenance of the universe. The sprouting of the seeds augurs the fact that the gods are pacified and that the function would be a success. Then the great resolve (*mahasankalpa*) is made and to mark this the priests that are to conduct the wedding tie the sacred knots with thread or Kusa Grass round their wrists and also round the wrists of the processional image of the Lord and his consort.<sup>22</sup> The preliminaries include certain sacrifices designed to pacify the deities guarding the marriage-hall (*vastu-devatas*) and the installation of Garuda, the devine vehicle of the Lord, on the premises of his hall.<sup>23</sup>

**THE DAY OF THE KALYANA:** The conduct of the wedding festival starts at the nightfall of the Ekadasi. A few minor differences between ritual in the morning and that in the evening ceremony have to be noted. The preliminaries of the ritual start with the worship of the pedestal on which the image of the Lord is stationed. The pacification ceremony (*baliharana*) is not limited to the premises of the temple, but extends over the entire village on the hill to appease the deities of the village.

**DHWAJAROHANA:** The hoisting of Garudadhwaaja is an indication that the festival has commenced. The preliminaries of this important feature, consisting of the worship of Garuda, a performance of a sacrifice, the ceremonial installation of Garuda on the flag, take place on the day previous to the day of actual

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<sup>22</sup> The preliminaries act as a sort of insulation from any possible contamination.

<sup>23</sup> Since the Lord is to be conducted to this hall, it has to be first consecrated by satisfying the Vastudevatas.





Fig. 19 : The Naga Pillar

ceremony. Along with the pacification ceremony in the morning, the Garudadhwaja is taken round the village and is placed before the flagstaff. The hoisting takes place after the performance of the worship by the *parikshaghar* accompanied by traditional musical chores and recitals from the Veda.

**RATHOTSAVA:** Before entering the marriage-hall the Lord is taken round the village on the temple car (*ratha*) specially decorated for the purpose. He is accompanied by his entourage consisting of the priests, the Boyas, the Nayakas and the musicians. The Rathotsava is one of the highlights of the day, and devotees participate in the ceremony by dragging the Ratha. About 10 p. m. the Lord enters the marriage-hall where the wedding is performed in much the same fashion as wedding in any Hindu family.

**OTHER DAYS:** From the 12th day to the full-moon day the daily worship is performed in the usual way. The progress of the wedding festival is marked by certain special features. Religious discourses on the Veda, the Puranas and the Itihasas take place in the morning hours while the nights are made lively by musical recitals and other similar types of entertainment by celebrated *pandits*. On each day, at the close of the proceedings the deity is taken round the village on the Sarva-janamanoranjani and others chosen one after another. On the 13th day of the fortnight, the ceremony of the benediction of elders (*sadasyam*) takes place about 4.00 p. m. The eight guardian deities controlling the quarters (*Ashtadikpalakas*) are invoked on a mandala and the priests chant selected hymns from the Vedas,<sup>24</sup> which express blessings of the *dikpalas*.

**FULL-MOON DAY:** On the full-moon day after the morning ritual, the last sacrificial rite to the fire-god is performed (*purnahuti*). The final extinction of the sacred fire then takes place. The last rite of the morning is the purification ceremony which takes place at the Gangadhara, the Lord's bathing ghat. On the night of the full-moon day, Bhaktotsava is celebrated.

The festival of Bhaktotsava centres round Tirumangai Alvar,

<sup>24</sup> This benediction scene, with the divine couple in the centre and *Ashta dikpalakas* around, is sculpturally depicted in the marriage-hall of the temple at Lepakshi (Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh). The divine couple, which these sculptures show are, however, Lord Siva and his consort Parvati.

the most celebrated among the twelve Alvars. He is believed to have plied the career of a brigand before he attained salvation. The story current in the Vaishnava traditions is that his original name was Parakala. Carrying on his vocation of robber Parakala at one time attempted to steal the image of Lord Vishnu himself. Failing in his attempts to kidnap him physically, and being advised that the only way to do it is through penance, he took to penance. So steadfast and fiery was the devotion of this convert that the Lord not only gave him his grace but instituted a special festival in his name to show his love towards his devotee.<sup>25</sup> To be true to the story, a mock-stealing of Lord's ring is arranged and the story of Tirumangai Alvar contained in the Telugu work, *Lakshmi-narayana Samvadam*, is read aloud.<sup>26</sup> Shortly after, to signify the fact that the functions connected with the marriage of the Lord are over, the flag is unhoisted.

EPILOGUE: Though the actual marriage ceremony is over on the 5th day, the 6th day, being the day of *Sayana Seva*, is reckoned as a sort of epilogue to the wedding ritual. The image of the Lord is put to bed with his consort after performing the various services and reading the Telugu work *Lakshmi Narayana Samvadam* which contains a game of wit and repartee between the Lord and his consort.

CHANDANA YATRA: Out of all the festivals of the temple the *Chandana yatra* is the most important one and attracts pilgrims from various parts of the country. This occurs on the 3rd day of the first half of the month of Vaisakha, approximately corresponding to April. This day, described as Akshaya Tritiya, is believed to be one of the days specially favoured by Lord Vishnu (*Vishnu Priti divasa*). It is said in sacred lore, that one who propitiates Vishnu on this day with sandal-wood paste attains salvation and that even a small offering of it on this day will give the donor infinite bliss.<sup>27</sup> This day is thus chosen for the celebration of the festival connected with sandal. The sandal-wood paste that covers the deity is removed in the early

<sup>25</sup> See Prapannamrtamu.

<sup>26</sup> This is written by Kurmanathakavi. See supra, chapter IV for information about the poet.

<sup>27</sup> Yah karoti trtiyayam Vishnum chandana bhushitam, Vaisakhasya site pakshe sayatyachuta mandiram—A saying.



hours of the morning and once again applied at the dusk, leaving full twelve hours to the devotees to see the Lord's *nijarupa*.<sup>28</sup>

The function starts early in the morning at about 4-00 p.m. with the worship of the sacred seat of the Lord, amidst the chanting of hymns from the Vedas; and the priests divest the deity of the layers of sandal, the whole procedure being started by the religious head, the *parikshaghar*. The sandal-wood paste is applied on layers of silk-cloth, and as it is removed, the cloth comes off in tatters. Now the Lord's original form reveals itself, and with devotion the priests perform the *Panchamrtabhisheka*. This *archana* is only preliminary, to the main *archana* of the evening and in it, in lieu of the usual food-offering, uncooked foods (*apachana*) like fruits are offered. About 6-00 a. m. the devotees are permitted to have a *darshan* of the original form of the Lord.

The evening ritual starts with a number of bathing services (*abishekas*). The most important of these are bathing service with water in which sandal-wood paste is mixed (*chandanabhisheka*) and the bathing service with water collected in a thousand pots (*sahasraghattabisheka*). Once these services are over, the deity is covered with sandal-wood paste. The applying of the sandal-wood paste like that of divesting is inaugurated by the *parikshaghar*. A full-scale ritual is performed now, and all the three food-offerings, the *balabhoga* of the morning, the *rajabhoga* of the noon and the *ratri avasara* of the night, are offered together to compensate the omission of these during the day.

**NARASIMHA JAYANTI:** The Narasimha Jayanti festival which

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<sup>28</sup> It is to be noted that the twelve maunds weight of sandal-wood paste that covers the image of the Lord is not applied on this day itself. Only four maunds are fixed for the day. The rest of the sandal-wood paste is applied in three instalments on three auspicious days. They are: The Narasimha Jayanti Day (the 14th day of the bright half of the month of Vaisakha), Ashadha suddha purnami (the full-moon day in the month of Ashadha) and the Jyestha suddha purnami (the full-moon day in the month of Jyestha). The sandal-wood paste needed for the functions takes time to prepare. Hence an auspicious day, which must be a few days earlier than the actual festival day, is chosen for the commencement of the preparation of the sandal, and this is usually inaugurated with due ceremony by the village munsiff.

occurs on the 14th day of the first half of the month of Vaisakha celebrates the 'birth day' of the Lord. The special feature of this festival is the conduct of the evening ritual of the Lord on a specially prepared seat in the assembly-hall. The proceedings of the morning are as usual, but the *rajabhoga* is omitted and postponed to the night time. The evening ritual starts about 6-00 p. m. and is essentially the same as the daily *archana* up to the state of the sacred bath. Then a respite to the course of ritual is given by reading out of the chapter from the Kshetra-mahatmya which deals with the genesis of the Lord's incarnation. This is followed up by the usual last phase of the ritual, namely, the offering of *dipa*, *dhupa* and *naivedya*.

**GIRIPRAKASHINA:** In the festival of *Giri pradakshina*, the devotees take the principal part. The sanction for the festival is only the custom which ordains that the devotees who want the Lord's favour can obtain it by circumambulating around the hill, which the Lord has chosen as his seat, on the full-moon day in the month of Ashadha (June). The devotees of the Lord, hailing mainly from the countryside, observe a fast on this day and go around the hill a distance of about twenty miles. They eat their dinner only after completing the circumambulation, and having a *darsan* of the Lord. Those who cannot undertake this, satisfy themselves by making 108 circumambulations in the temple itself.

**KRISHNASHTAMI OR SRI JAYANTI:** This festival which celebrates the birth-day of Lord Krishna, and which falls on Ashtami (the 8th day) of the month of Sravana (August), is one of the important festivals celebrated in all the temples of Andhra. The festival starts at 7-00 p. m. The processional image of Andal is taken round the cloister and is made to occupy the ivory throne situated at the northwestren corner. This taking the deity around is accompanied by the recital of some relevant chapter from the Upanishads. Then the scene of the birth of the Lord is enacted in a make-believe fashion. After this, the eight *upacharas* are performed. This is followed by the reading of the chapter on the birth of Lord Krishna from the Bhagavata and of some sections of the Dravida Veda.

On the next day, to glorify Lord Krishna's childhood pranks, a festival called *Utlotsava* is celebrated. This is a festival of



the entire village and every one participates in it. Krishna around whom this festival revolves is celebrated, in all the legends about his youthful days, as the mischievous lad who used to steal butter from the *uttis* in the pastoral households.<sup>29</sup> To celebrate this a special *Utti* with a *kalasa* and a coconut over it is set up on the precincts of the temple. This *Utti* is hung to a pulley in the centre of a across bar of about 4 ft. fixed to bamboo uprights. The youth that flock around the temple for the occasion are challenged to strike at the *Utti* which eludes them each time they try to catch it. After this carnival, milk is offered to the Lord and is distributed among the participants.

NAVARATROTSAVAS: The Navaratri *utsavas* which occur in the month of Asvayuja (October) are conducted for the glory of Lakshmi, the principal Deveri.<sup>30</sup> The special service to Lakshmi takes place every evening of the nine days starting from 1st day to the 9th day of the first half of the month. The processional image of Lakshmi, known in the temple as Chaturbhuja Tayar, is taken round the cloister of the temple, and made to occupy a special seat in the assembly-hall. An interesting feature of the service rendered to the goddess Lakshmi is the chanting of the Srisukta at the time of the sacred bath. This is followed by the *pushpa puja* and the final offering of *dipa*, *dhupa* and *naivedya*.

SAMI PUJA: The festival of Sami Puja occurs on the Vijayadasami, the 10th day of the first half of the month of Asvayuja. The importance of Vijayadasami is known all over India. This is the day on which many Hindu kings of the past launched their victorious campaigns (*digvijayas*). It is the day on which the Pandavas got back their weapons from the Sami tree where they hid them before they went incognito. The Pandavas worshipped their weapons on this day and prayed for success in their efforts. Since then the Vijayadasami Day has been marked for the worship of weapons (*ayudhapuja*) and the Sami tree. So, on this day, the processional image of the Lord-adorned with regal attire, is conducted on his palanquin into

<sup>29</sup> The *utti* is a basket made out of rope usually hung to a hook at the roof, in which milk and butter are kept to keep them out of reach of the domestic animals and children.

<sup>30</sup> Adhachasvayaja masi kartavyam Viralakshmotsvavidhim..... Isvara-samhita, 13th canto, 92nd verse.

the garden down the hill. There the *Sami* tree is worshipped. The leaves of the tree are showered over the Lord and then distributed among the devotees. The deity is taken around the village on the hill on a ceremonious elephant ride after the completion of the proceedings of the day.

**KARTIKA DIPAM:** The month of Kartika (November) is a sacred month for the Hindus. It is said in the religious literature that if one makes a gift of a lamp (*dipadana*) in the temple in this month, it amounts to making a *dipadana* for the whole year.<sup>81</sup> In this month, the full-moon day is considered to be the most sacred day and on this day the festival of Kartika Dipam is celebrated.<sup>82</sup> This festival is mentioned in the temple inscriptions of the 13th century as Kartika Dipavali.

The festival starts in the evening. The celebration of it resembles to a certain extent the *ankurarpana* ceremony. Twelve earthen containers with oil and vicks are placed on a *mandala*. Eight Dikpalas, Brahma, Narasimha, the principal deity of the place, Sesha and Garuda are invoked in these containers and the lighting of the vicks takes place. Then the lighted containers are placed at the cardinal points of the temple.

The last phase of the festival is the taking of the Lord's processional image around the village and a ritual designed to worship the Fire-God (*Agni*). A small hut is erected on the premises of the temple with dried plantain leaves. The Lord is first taken around the temple (*tiruvudhi*) and finally conducted to the *vedika* (platform) near the newly prepared hut. Then incense (burnt camphor) is offered to the Lord and then the hut is burnt with the same. The Lord is taken round the fire thrice amidst recital of hymns, and is conducted back to the shrine.

**DHANURMASOTSAVA:** The *Dhanurmasotsava* celebrates the famous *tapas* of Andal, the Lord's consort. They occur in the month of Margasirsha (December – January). These should be described more appropriately as Margasirshamahotsavas. But

<sup>81</sup> It is for this reason that we find in the inscriptions many endowments for *akhandadipa* to be made in this month.

<sup>82</sup> This festival is celebrated both in the Vishnu and the Saiva shrines alike.

since the festival originated in Tamilnad where they are described as Dhanurmasotsavas owing to the fact that they are reckoned according to the movements of the sun on the zodiac, they are described likewise in the temples of Andhra.<sup>33</sup> The month of Margasirsha, as is well known, is specially associated with Lord Krishna.<sup>34</sup> We are told in the *Bhagavatam* that the Gopikas observed a *vrata* in the month of Margasirsha and obtained Lord Krishna's blessings for doing this.<sup>35</sup> It is in this month that Andal went through her penance.

THE STORY OF ANDAL : Andal, known as Godadevi, was the foster child of Vishnuchitta who as a saint of the Vaishnavite theism is known as Peria-Alvar. From her childhood, Godadevi showed signs of religiosity. Her favourite deity was Lord Ranganatha. As she grew up, her devotion to Ranganatha turned into an ardent love of the Lord. So fixed was her mind that when she attained marriageable age she wanted to marry him and none else. Her intense devotion expressed itself through songs. These are known as thirty stories sung even today in all Vaishnava shrines. Andal finally realized her dream when she took herself to the feet of Lord Ranganatha at Srirangam and merged herself in Him.

THE UTSAVA : The thirty days of the meditation of Andal are celebrated by a special ritual in the Andal shrine for the entire month of Margasirsha. On each day, a verse from the Gatha Trimsat is read out by the priests. The celebration of the wedding of Goda with Lord Ranganatha, however, takes place on the 9th day of first half of the month of Pushyam (December - January).

ADHYAYANOTSAVA : It should be noted that the Dhanurmasotsavas include the special services conducted in front of the principal deity throughout the month. If the festival, conducted in honour of Andal has the sanction of custom, the Lord's special festivals are ordained by the scriptures.<sup>36</sup> The Lord is conducted to the assembly-hall and worshipped with special

<sup>33</sup> The Tamils calculate their months on the solar movements in the Mesha rasi. But it should be noted that the standard reckoning adopted by all Agama texts is the lunar reckoning which is current in Andhra.

<sup>34</sup> Masanam Marghasirshoham, Bhagavata, X chapter, 35 verse.

<sup>35</sup> Bhagavata, X Chapter.

<sup>36</sup> Isvara Samhita, 13th canto.

services for ten days in the mornings (*pahalpattu*), from 1st day to 10th day in the fortnight and at nights from 11th to the 5th day of the second fortnight (*rapattu*). This festival is called Adhyayanotsava since 4,000 verses of the *Nalayira Prabandha* are recited during these 20 days in front of the Lord. The special service connected with this festival includes the recital of the *Veda*, the *Purana* and the *Itihasa*, and the offering of special foods on each day. These are done on a grand scale on the 11th day which is a sacred day (*parva dina*) and which is known as Vaikuntha Ekadasi. On each day in the second phase, that is, the worshipping of the Lord at nights from the 11th to the 5th day of the second fortnight, of the Lord is erected on a specially prepared porch and special services suited to each incarnation are performed, one on each day.

**MAKARAVETA :** The festival of *Makaraveta* occurs on the day after Makara Sankramana (the winter solstice occurring in the middle of the month of Pushya, corresponding to January).<sup>37</sup> This is intended to celebrate Lord Vishnu's great rescue of the elephant, Gajendra, which is well-known as a story described at length in the *Bhagavata*. A mighty elephant was once caught by a crocodile while drinking water from a lake. He tries hard for a long time to get out of the clutches of the crocodile. As a last resort, the elephant prays to the Lord Vishnu with the utmost devotion. Lord Vishnu comes to his rescue and delivers him from the clutches of the crocodile. This story of the *Bhagavata* is read and enacted in a make-believe fashion on this day near the temple tank at the foot of the hill where the Lord is conducted in the afternoon. A mock crocodile-hunt is arranged and the Lord is worshipped. After this, the Lord is once again conducted back to his original abode in the temple, and is taken round the village in a procession on his Sarvajana manoranjani Vahana by about 9-00 p.m.

**TEPPOTSAVAM :** Another festival which has the sanction of the Agama texts and which is celebrated in most of the South Indian temples is the Floating festival (*Teppotsava*). This occurs on the new-moon day of the month of Pushya (January).<sup>38</sup> The

<sup>37</sup> The festival of *Makaraveta* is referred to in the Chebrolu inscription of Jayapa Nayaka, the famous General of Ganapati of the Kakatiya Dynasty. See E. I. Vol. XII.

<sup>38</sup> Isvara Samhita, 12th canto, verse 3.



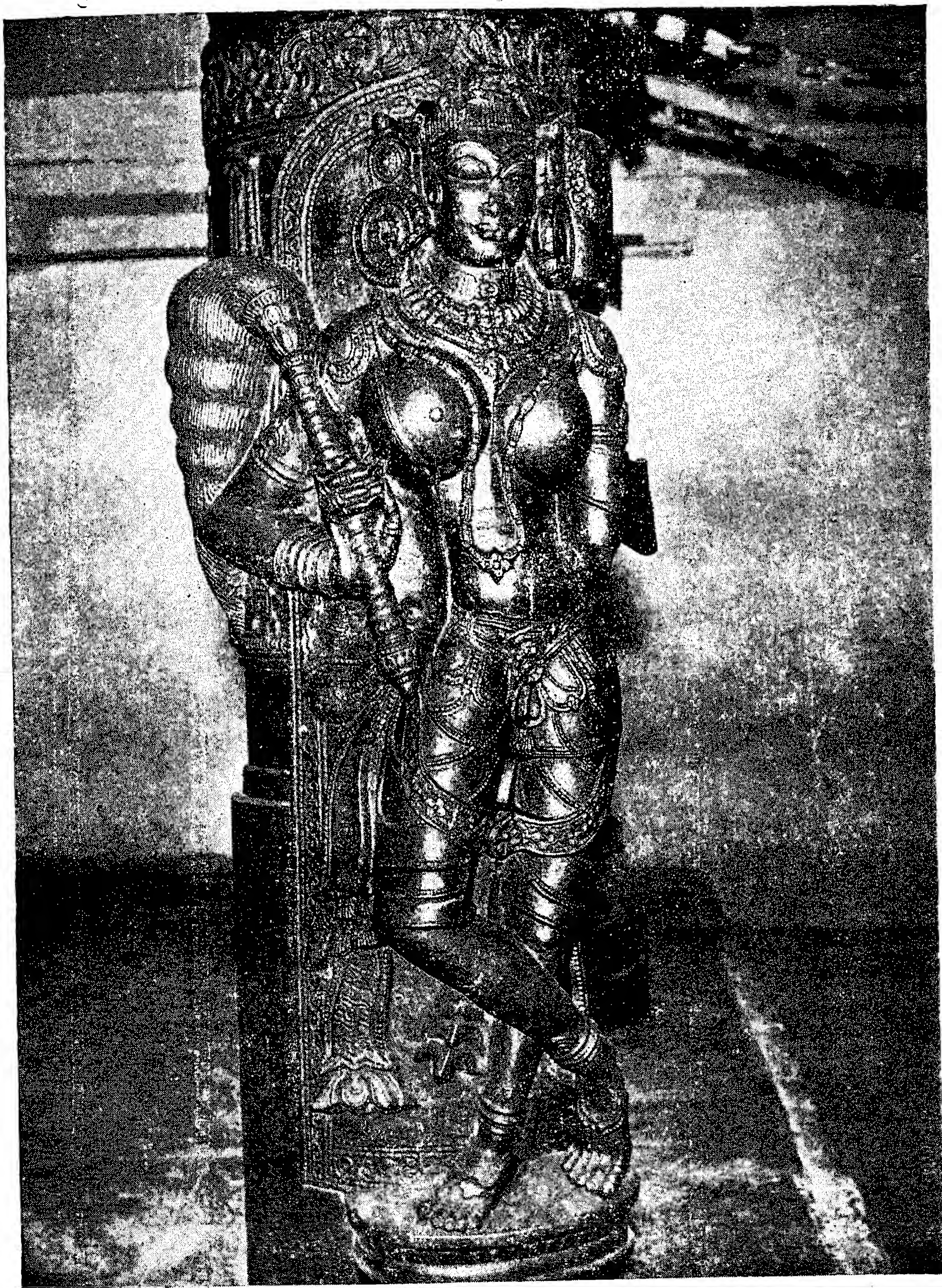


Fig. 20 : A *chauri* bearer



Lord is conducted to the temple tank, and there He enjoys a pleasure-ride on a boat (*teppa*). After this, He is worshipped and conducted back to the temple. He is taken round the village on the hill about 9.00 p.m. on his Sarvajana Manoranjani Vahana.

**DOLOTSAVA :** This festival of great rejoicing occurs on the full-moon day of the month of Phalguna (February–March). It is the day when Lord Vishnu put an end to Holika, a female demon and sister of Hiranyakasipu. The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm as the festival of Holi in North India. The Dolotsava is one of the important festivals of North India and is a popular festival in the Orissan temples. The importance given to the festival in Simhachalam shows the contacts the temple had with the Odhra country in earlier times.

The festival starts in the afternoon when the Lord is conducted to his garden in the village down the hill. He is made to occupy a specially prepared seat in the garden. Then with the chant of hymns the sprinkling of the red powder on the Lord (*churnotsava*) takes place.<sup>39</sup> Then the image of the Lord is placed on the swing and moved to and fro in a ceremonial way. The sight of this swinging Lord is believed to confer great blessings on the devotees.<sup>40</sup>

**KAMADAHANA UTSAVA :** Another important festival, the festival of the 'Burning of Desire' (*Kamadahana*), occurs on the full-moon day in the month of Phalguna (February–March). According to the Sri Vaishnavas of the temple, it is only a self-purification ceremony and is not connected with the *puranic* story of the burning of Cupid (*Kamadahana*) by Lord Siva. The festival starts about 8.00 p. m. The deity is conducted to a hut prepared for the occasion at the gateway of the *kshetra*. Then the sacrifices (*homas*) such as the Inkara Homa, Anga

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<sup>39</sup> The introduction of the Churnotsava shows the influence of the practice that obtains in Orissan temples. Among the temples of Andhra only at Srikurmam and Simhachalam, the celebration of *Churnotsava* takes place.

<sup>40</sup> *Dolayamanam Govindam, Manchastam Madhusudhanam Rathastam Kesavam Drshtva Punarjanma Naidyate* (A saying). The *Dolotsava* is celebrated at Tirupati and in other temples of the South as the Unjal festival. This festival is celebrated alike in both Siva and Vishnu shrines. Inscriptions of Draksharama (a Saivite shrine) refer to this festival. See S. I. I. Vol. IV, No. 1368.

Homa, designed to burn every aspect of the desire, are performed with an elaborate ritual, and the hut is symbolically burnt to mark the annihilation of Kama.

### Minor Festivals

The festivals described already constitute the major religious functions of the temple. Apart from these, there are the festivals of the week (*Varotsavas*), the festivals of the fortnight (*Pakshotsavas*) and the festivals of the month (*Masotsavas*). The festivals performed on Gurusvara (Thursday), Sukravara (Friday), Ekadasi (the 11th day of the fortnight), Purnami (the full-moon day), Amavasya (the new-moon day), Sankranti (winter solstice), Vishuvas (equinoxes), Grahana (eclipse), Tirunakshatra (natal constellations obtaining at the time of the birth of the saints) come under this category.<sup>41</sup> These are generally performed in the afternoons. The two principal phases of these festivals are the *tiruvudhi* of the Lord and the performance of the special service appropriate to the occasion. The Sukravarotsava is celebrated in honour of Chaturbhuja Tayar, and accordingly the processional image of the Lord's consort is taken around the cloister and special services are rendered in her shrine. Special services prescribed for the birth days of the Vaishnava Saints are rendered in the Alvar shrine.

INSCRIPTIONAL EVIDENCE: The inscriptions testify to the fact that from the beginning of the existence of the temple, the *mulavirat* received the greatest attention and almost every element of the ritual is meant for his satisfaction (*Nrhareh prityardham*). However, in contrast to the present practice, some of the *parsva* and *avarana devatas* were receiving *dhupa*, *dipa* and *naivedya*. An inscription of the 14th century registers an endowment for the worship of Yajna Varaha, a *parsva devata* carved on the outer wall of the central shrine.<sup>42</sup> Similarly a

<sup>41</sup> The origin of many of these *Utsavas* can be traced to the importance, attached to the movement of Heavenly Bodies causing the months (*masas*) the seasons (*rtus*), the solstices (*sankramana*), and the equinoxes (*vishuvas*). All these movements together with the asterisms at the time of the birth of the Alvars and Acharyas, days specially associated with Lord Vishnu (*Vishnu Panca dinas* or *Vishnupritidivasa*), are considered holy and hence are celebrated in the temples. According to the Agamas, the *Visesha Puja* (special service) has to be performed on all these days.

<sup>42</sup> S. I. I, Vol. VI, No. 761; *akhanda dipanaku*.

15th century inscription records an endowment for a special ritual to the images carved on the pilasters of the cloister.<sup>43</sup>

The daily temple ritual as it exists now consists of two principal services and three *bhogas*. A number of inscriptions refer to the *archana* in its two phases (*ubhaya dhupala*).<sup>44</sup> An inscription of the 13th century mentions an endowment for the three *naivedyas* of the Lord.<sup>45</sup> Inscriptions also refer to the phases of the ritual like *avakasa*, *tiruvaradhana dhupa* and *baliharana*.<sup>46</sup> Endowments for bringing water for the Holy Bath of the Lord are mentioned in a number of inscriptions.<sup>47</sup> The procedure of *tirumajjana* was the same even in the medieval times for an inscription of the 14th century refers to the chanting of the Purusha Sukta at the time of the sacred bath.<sup>48</sup> Inscriptions also refer to the recital of the sacred lore and singing at the time of the conduct of the *archana*.<sup>49</sup> With regard to the various preparations offered to the Lord one can notice a close similarity between the practice at present and that in the distant past. The midday offering, just as it is obtaining at present, consisted of a full meal with various dishes.<sup>50</sup> Again, just as is now, milk in the afternoon service and pudding in the evening service used to be offered in the medieval times also.<sup>51</sup>

UTSAVAS: The earliest reference to Utsavas occurs in an inscription of A. D. 1226 which refers to the Ekadasi festival of *Dhanurmasa*.<sup>52</sup> Another inscription of the 13th century refers to the weekly festival (*varotsava*).<sup>53</sup> The Akshaya Trtiya festival is first referred to in an inscription of Saka 1215 (A. D. 1293).<sup>54</sup> Likewise festivals like Kalyanotsava, Narasimha Jayanti, Krishna Jayanti, Ashada Punnami, and Kartika Dipotsava

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, No. 844.

<sup>44</sup> As for example, Nos. 816 and 941.

<sup>45</sup> No. 941.

<sup>46</sup> Nos. 1088, 845, 776 and 712.

<sup>47</sup> As for example No. 1057.

<sup>48</sup> No. 962.

<sup>49</sup> See *Infra*, chapter VI, p. 146.

<sup>50</sup> No. 727.

<sup>51</sup> No. 724 refers to *palu aragimpu* and 726 refers to the offering of *payasamu* at the evening service.

<sup>52</sup> No. 1203.

<sup>53</sup> No. 1167 refers to Sukravarotsava.

<sup>54</sup> No. 1140.

are referred to in the inscriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries.<sup>55</sup> The only festival which is not celebrated at present is the Kumara Punnami festival occurring in the month of Bhadrapada (September).<sup>56</sup>

It is interesting to note that some of the practices which obtain at present in the celebration of the festivals were observed even in the remote past. An inscription of (A.D. 1220) refers to the practice of taking the Lord to a porch for the celebration of a festival.<sup>57</sup> The functions such as the taking the Lord's image round the cloister on his palanquin (*tiruvīdhi*) and the taking the Lord's image round the village (*grama pradakshina*) are mentioned in the inscriptions.<sup>58</sup> Special endowments were made to the Sanis for performing the Vinjamaseva on festival days.<sup>59</sup> Another practice which shows interesting historic continuity is the offering of all the varieties of food offerings in the evening service on the Akshaya Trtiya when the *nijarupa* of the Lord is presented to the devotees.<sup>60</sup>

The celebration of the festivals reached a high peak in the 14th and 15th centuries. The description given by the poet Srinatha about the *tirunallu* of Simhadrinatha has already been cited.<sup>61</sup> Inscriptional evidence shows that enormous preparations were made for the celebration of the festivals. Servants were engaged for the removal of the useless vegetation that had grown on the temple premises and other jobs like the white washing the premises were also attended to.<sup>62</sup> In the 14th century, the chief of Elamanchi erected an iron post specially intended for the Dhvajarohana.<sup>63</sup> A number of endowments were specially earmarked for the celebration of the festivals. The '*tirunallu*' of Simhadrinatha thus acquired great popularity and used to attract people from far and near. Thus it is no wonder if the festivals of Simhadrinatha were celebrated by the poets of the 15th and 16th centuries in their works.

<sup>55</sup> Nos. 919, 896, 952 and 719.

<sup>56</sup> No. 706.

<sup>57</sup> No. 1167.

<sup>58</sup> Nos. 815 and 1198.

<sup>59</sup> No. 1140.

<sup>60</sup> No. 816.

<sup>61</sup> See supra, chapter IV, p. 93.

<sup>62</sup> S.I.I. Vol. 1136.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, No. 919.



In conclusion it must be mentioned that in all matters connected with the ritual the practices in the temple exhibit traditions of the Tamil country (*Dravida Sampradaya*). Firstly, the very names by which the principal deities are usually described show a Tamil influence. The *mulavirat* is called as 'Perumallu' and the Lords' consorts as 'Thayar'. Secondly, the use of 'tiru' for a number of things connected with the temple, as for example, *tiruvīdhi*, *tirusannidhi*, *tiruvāradhana* and *tirunallu*—shows the same kind of influence. Thirdly, the *naivedya* or *prasada* offered to the Lord consists of preparations most of which obtain only in Tamilnad. Fourthly, the celebrations of a number of festivals according to the solar reckoning prevailing in the Tamil country is another example of the Tamil influence. Though *Utlotsava* is performed by the people of Andhra on the Krishnashtami (8th day in the month of Sravana), it is celebrated in the temple on the following day as is the custom in the Tamil country. Thus it is the Dravida tradition brought by the Srivaishnava priests that governed and still governs the conduct of the ritual of the temple and it is to this tradition that we must attribute the unbroken continuity of the various practices.

## The Temple and the Society

Simhachalam and the region around it were towed into the currents of political life by the activity of the Chalukya Cholas. The necessity of setting up a political outpost in the region of the Visakhapatnam District (Madhyama Kalinga) was felt by the Chalukya Cholas who claimed Mahendragiri in the Ganjam District as their northern boundary. The officers of Kulottunga, in order to stabilize the position of Anantavarmachoda Ganga, moved to and fro between Vengi and the Ganga capital at Mukhalingam. It was during these movements that they rechristened Visakhapatnam as Kulottungachola Pattana and revived the shrine at Simhachalam.

The growth of the settlement on the hill and at the foot of the hill must have been a difficult process. The entire region must have been a hilly and forest tract which had to be cleared before any human settlement could grow in it.<sup>1</sup> In the entire phase of history starting from the last quarter of 11th century and ending in the later half of 13th century, there exist only 37 inscriptions, and this shows the slow growth of the settlement. It was only due to the keen interest shown by the Ganga rulers and their feudatories like the Matsyas of Oddadi and Chalukyas of Elamanchi that the real growth of Simhachalam started. It is noteworthy that the same inscription which describes the renovation of the temple also mentions a village

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<sup>1</sup> The description of Kalinga given by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang is worthy of notice in this connection. He mentions that Kalinga (ka-len-ka), the perimeter which was about 1,000 miles, was full of dense forests (Water's *Ywan Chwang*, page 198). In the later inscriptions this region has been described as Sapta Kalingas or Sapta Madiyas (Virarajendra's *Manimangalam record of the 11th century*, E. Ind., Vol. 21, p. 232). The term *Madiya*, same as *Maliya* is derived from *mala*, a mountain. The region was thus from all accounts a hilly and forest tract.

down the hill by name as Adavaramu.<sup>2</sup>

THE NATURE OF THE SETTLEMENT: The inscriptions neither indicate any development of a civil polity in the region nor do they mention the total number of families living either on the premises of the temple or in the village at the foot of the hill. Inscriptions, however, enumerate the different classes of people connected with the temple who stayed on the premises of the temple. A 13th century record tells us that Narasimha I gave to the temple a band of 100 Sanis to propitiate the God.<sup>3</sup> That the Sanis lived on the premises of the temple is known from another inscription.<sup>4</sup> A lengthy inscription from the reign of Narasimha II reports that provision for feeding 30 brahmins in a *matha* situated at the top of the hill was made by an officer of the king.<sup>5</sup> Besides the Brahmins and Sanis, it is possible that others connected with the activities of the temple like the *archakas*, *paricharikas*, Boyas and Dasaris also resided on the hill. The people who cultivated lands and gardens must have stayed in Adivivaram, the village at the foot of the hill.

SIMHACHALAM, A MILITARY OUTPOST: In addition to those connected with the activities of the temple, a contingent of troops must have stayed on the premises of the temple to keep peace in the region. The inscriptions refer to the existence of military offices from the very beginning of the existence of the temple. In Kulottunga's inscriptions of Saka 1021 (A.D. 1099) figure two officers of the king.<sup>6</sup> The temple itself was renovated by a Senapati of Narasimha I in the 13th century.<sup>7</sup> An inscription of the time of Bhanudeva I mentions one Vijayapadi-rayundu styled as an officer of the Gangas at Simhagiri (Simhagiristhanamuna *kalinga pariksha*).<sup>8</sup> Another inscription acquaints us with Narayana senapati who visited the temple as a

<sup>2</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1142 ; Puspavatikaku adavaramuna cherulo puttandu senennu. 'Adavaramu' is a corruption of 'Adivaram' (the original name of the town as found in the records), a Tamil word, meaning, a place situated on the flank (varam) at the foot of a mountain. 'Adivaramu' is also mentioned in another inscription of the temple. See S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 902.

<sup>3</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1197 ; Strinam satamakalpayat.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, No. 1202.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, No. 904. Trimsat bhusura bhojyasatra sadanam.

<sup>6</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1144.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, No. 1142.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, No. 1179.

*kalinga pariksha* and made a number of endowments.<sup>9</sup> Tradition also avers that the temple acted as a military outpost and was surrounded by a number of bastions. Thus though no civil authority exercised control over the details of the affairs of the temple, the king's officers who maintained peace in the region must have wielded some supervisory control of the temple. The direct control exercised by Vizianagaram rulers in the 18th century was the culmination of a process first initiated by the rulers of the Ganga dynasty.

**SIMHACHALAM IN MODERN TIMES:** The development of Simhachalam and Adivivaram in modern times has been largely due to the policy of the *Zamindars* of Vizianagaram. While gifting 14 villages to the temple, they were wise enough to apportion considerable portions (number of plots) as gifts (*inams*) to the families that served the temple in various capacities.<sup>10</sup> Thus the settlements both on the hill and in the village down the hill began to grow. The *Kham Bhogatta* of Fasli 1223 (A.D. 1814) mentions that 206 people were living in the village on the hill. The *Kaifiyat* of Simhachalam written in the later half of 19 century enumerates the population of Simhachalam as consisting of 100 Brahmin families, 50 Sudras and 10 Sanis.<sup>11</sup> Thus a total population of about 1,000 was distributed on the hill and at the foot of the hill.<sup>12</sup> At the beginning of the present century, while the population on the hill touched the mark of 500, the village at the foot of the hill shows a greater development. The survey record of Adivaram (Adivivaram) (1905) mentions that there were in that village 521 houses with a population of 2,327.<sup>13</sup> During the present century, there has been a steady growth of Adivivaram which has now a population of about 6,000. It has to be noted that even now the village is mainly dependent on the temple and its employees for its growth.

**SRIVAISHNAVA PRIESTS:** The earliest settlers of the place were

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<sup>9</sup> A number of inscriptions before enumerating the details of endowments first mention the officers of the Gangas under whose tenure (*veharana*) the donations were made.

<sup>10</sup> See Inam Fair Register, Appendix No. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Kaifiyat of Simhachalam*, See Local Records Vol. IV.

<sup>12</sup> Of these 267 people were employed by the temple in various services. The statement of 1834 enumerates the functionaries of the temple.

<sup>13</sup> See *Survey Record of Adivivaram*.





Fig. 21 : Varaha Narasimha (Nija rupa)  
— Courtesy : Arch. Survey of India

the Srivaishnava priests, other Brahmins, Dasaris, Boyas, Khilaris and Sanis. From its inception each endowment for the temple is placed under the care of Srivaishnavas. Vaishnava families were thus the earliest settlers. An inscription of Saka 1026 (A.D. 1104) mentions that a trader from Cholamandala made an endowment for the supply of a flower-garland to the Lord.<sup>14</sup> He deposited 14 *madas* in the Sribhandara for a *nibandhana* to one Srihari-nambi who was required to maintain the endowment. Srihari-nambi, as the name indicates, must have been a Vaishnava. In the very early days, Srivaishnavas must have not only looked after the ritual of the Lord but also cultivated flower gardens. As has already been observed, the emergence of this class of priests who have made ritual their vocation started with the Vaishnava movement spearheaded by Ramanuja and his immediate followers. Since the movement originated in Tamilnad, and the revival of the life of the temple took place under the patronage of the Chalukya-Cholas, these Vaishnava settlers must have hailed from Tamilnad.<sup>14a</sup> The designation of the priests by the Tamil word 'Nambyar' indicates their original home. Because of their dominant influence, the village at the bottom of the hill is named in Tamil as Adivaram, meaning the place situated at the foot of the hill.<sup>15</sup>

**BOYAS AND KHILARIS:** The Boyas and the Khilaris were attached to the temples of Andhra from a hoary past. They looked after cows and sheep and supplied milk and ghee to the temple.<sup>16</sup> Both these words, 'Boya' and 'Khilari', occur in the

<sup>14</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1173.

<sup>14a</sup> The Chalukya-Chola period was notable for the general movement of the people and traditions of Tamilnad into Telugu Country. An examination of the several epigraphs of Draksharama shows the existence of a large influence of Tamil culture on the temple life of the Telugu Country (See A.R.E. 1935, Para 16). The three early inscriptions from the Simhachalam Temple show this influence in no uncertain terms. The first is dated in the time of the reign of Kulottunga I. The second, written in Tamil, mentions two Tamil officers. And the third mentions a merchant of cholamandala. See also my article 'Tamil Merchants in the trade of Medieval Andhra'—The Hindu, Madras, 29th April 1962.

<sup>16</sup> Even the priests of today claim that they hail from Tamilnad.

<sup>16</sup> The word 'boya' can be etymologically derived from the Sanskrit Bhojaka (one who feeds or nourishes). 'Bhojaka' occurs in this sense in the grant of Sivaskandavarman of the Pallava dynasty (E. Ind. Vol. I, 5. ff). A Prakrit variant of the word, 'Bhoigi' occurs in Satavahana inscriptions (Kanheri inscription, E. Ind. Vol. VII); 'Khilari' can also be derived from the Sanskrit 'Kshirarama' or a pen for cows.

Telugu inscriptions from the temples of Andhra starting from the 11th century A.D.<sup>17</sup> As many of the endowments of medieval times were designed for maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the temple, the temple authorities received a number of cows and sheep. The temple thus required the services of a large number of Khilaries to look after them.

**DASARIS:** The Dasaris were associated with the temple from the beginning of its active life.<sup>18</sup> These belonged to the sudra caste and received initiation into the Vaishnava religion from priests.<sup>19</sup> They used to cultivate the flower gardens and fields that lay around the temple and supply flowers to the temple, and fruits and vegetables to the mathas.<sup>20</sup> They used to carry the torches and did several chores connected with the temple. It is interesting to notice that till recently the temple maintained a Satani or Dasari to clean the premises of the temple.

**NAYAKAS:** Another class of temple servants consisted of Nayakas. They were employed in the service of the temple as torch-bearers in ceremonial processions of the Lord.<sup>21</sup> Some of them tended flower gardens.<sup>22</sup> There was a regular share in the consecrated food for the Nayakas. They were quite well off and made donations to the temple in their own turn.<sup>23</sup>

**BRAHMINS:** A few brahmin families other than the Srivai-shnavas settled in the area during the 12th and 13th centuries. These are brahmins from the Telugu country who were well versed in *Veda*, *Purana* and *Itihasa*.<sup>24</sup> Their services were naturally required to make the religious life complete. Starting

<sup>17</sup> S.I.I. Vol. X, Nos. 7, 12 and 13.

<sup>18</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1144 – An unpublished inscription which can be noticed on the outer wall of the temple, mentions an endowment made by a Dasari (See Appendix). The term *dasa* is derived from sanskrit '*das*' – to serve. Those who served inside the temple acquired the name '*dasa*'.

<sup>19</sup> See Edward Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol. VI, p. 301.

<sup>20</sup> No. 904 – indula kayakura satramunakunnu, nanavidhapushpamalalu narasimhanadhunikinni techchipettedi dasarula kiddarakunnu.

<sup>21</sup> 'Nayaka', etymologically can be derived from the Sanskrit root *ni*, – to lead; The servants who were initially employed to lead ceremonial processions acquired the name 'Nayaka', and in course of time, these became a caste.

<sup>22</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 742.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, Nos. 835 and 919.

<sup>24</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 904.

from Narahari Tirtha, a few Madhwa families also appear to have settled at the top of the hill.

SANIS : The Sanis were introduced into the temple during the 13th century thanks to the munificence of Narasimhadeva.<sup>25</sup> They worshipped the Lord by singing, dancing and playing on instrumental music and rendered such services as the *vinjamara seva*.

An account of the growth and nature of the settlement shows that the population that lived around the temple was never a large community. The reason for this is not far to seek. Simhachalam and the region around it offered no great scope for the growth of agriculture, and it has never been a rich crop-growing region like the Vamsadhara, Godavari, and Krishna regions.<sup>26</sup> Thus though there might have been a regular flow of floating population visiting the temple from far and near, the permanent residents of the place could not have been many. It is quite possible, and this is indicated by the inscriptions, that the permanent residents of the place were those who were directly connected with the temple one way or another. In view of this it is not surprising if the inscriptions do not furnish any evidence of social and political life of the people other than the one connected with the life of the temple. The community around Simhachalam may be termed as a 'temple community'. It was largely guided by the authorities in the temple administration.

As has already been mentioned, the administration of the temple was simple and was headed by a few persons who were in charge of the various aspects of the ritual. Inscriptions do not indicate any dealings between the management and the people as a whole. The Boyas, the Khilaris, the Dasaris and the Sanis received endowments for rendering a number of services.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, No. 1197.

<sup>26</sup> Prof. B. Subba Rao observes that the societies of the ancient and medieval South India developed predominantly in the rice-growing regions like the Godavari Krishna doab (See *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. IX). Proximity to water and lack of wild forests have been the two prerequisites for the development of ancient societies of India from the time of the proto-historic Indus Society. See Kosambi's *Introduction to the study of Indian History*, p. 53. The region around Simhachalam lacked these prerequisites. The region was a hilly tract and there is no river system near by. This has led to a slow evolution of the society.



There were also the people who tilled the lands of the temple, remitting taxes in kind. We do not know how the management dealt with any problem of default in the upkeep of any endowment. However, from the general nature of the life of the temple, it can be guessed that as long as the political authority was stable and the kings of the region maintained their contact with the people by deputing their officers for periodical inspections, all was well with the temple, and the stipulations of the endowments were maintained. The cessation of the life of the temple in the later half of the 16th century shows that no permanent institution other than royal support was capable of safeguarding religious life of the temple.

Such being the nature of the settlement it is no wonder if the most ancient families of the past are not now to be seen either on the premises of the temple or in the village at the bottom of the hill. The Muslim attacks on the temple and the complete cessation of the life of the temple for a considerable period of time resulted in a large scale displacement of the earlier settlers.<sup>27</sup> Though the Vaishnava priests look after the religious life of the temple even to date, the antiquity of the present families does not go back beyond 200 years. The Dasaris, Boyas and Khilaries are not to be seen today. These have been replaced by the Gollas and Kapus. Though the Devadasis continued to exist till recently, they are not scions of the ancient families. Thus during the course of the last two centuries, the modern castes and families have replaced those of ancient times.

### *The Temple's role in the Economic Life*

The temple in the medieval times was not only a religious and cultural institution but an economic institution *par excellence*. It acquired large assets, created employment for a great number of people and maintained facilities also for lodging and boarding.

**MECHANISM:** The assets of the temple consisted of lands, sheep, cows and cash. The foremost possession of the temple was its agricultural wealth. The temple also invested its money it earned, in the shape of silver and gold coins, in the

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<sup>27</sup> See *supra* chapter V, p. 199.



lands near the tanks and streams of the district. It farmed out its great agricultural wealth and those who tilled the temple lands supplied the commodities it needed. Thus the mechanism is self supporting.

The second asset of the temple was the Boarding House it maintained.<sup>28</sup> Though the temple kitchen was originally started in order to prepare the *naivedya*, it turned out to be a mammoth organization capable of feeding hundreds of persons. The foremost reason for the rise of the Boarding House was the anxiety of the donors to place those who were associated with temple free from all the cares of life which they would have had. Another practical reason for starting the Boarding House was the fact that a majority of the priests were not householders.<sup>28a</sup> In course of time, the Boarding House became an independent organization. The efficiency of this organization was such that in A. D. 1356, a religious teacher gave away his savings to the temple in order to be provided perpetually with 3 measures of consecrated food. The kitchen thus served more than one purpose.

The third facility of the temple was its capacity to create employment and commerce directly and indirectly. Directly it maintained a huge staff for running the ritual and other activities connected with it. It was also a source of demand to suppliers of groceries. Its festival gatherings created opportunities for commerce and business on the precincts of the temple. Apart from persons directly employed to till the lands, a good number of others received lands in the region of Visakhapatnam District for the maintenance of specific endowments to the temple like rendering the special service (*bhoga*). Like the lands, cows and sheep were gifted to individuals in and around Simhachalam for the maintenance and endowments to the temple. A classical instance of this type of transaction may be cited. In A. D. 1428, one Dharma Sahasamalla instituted an

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<sup>28</sup> The importance of the boarding house can be understood by a widely current Telugu Proverb: 'A temple offers a better place of security, than a house', 'Inti Kante Gudi Padilamu'. The boarding house also made the Srivaishnave community as a body of excellent cooks, a fact which can be observed now.

<sup>28a</sup> Some of them were monks, while others were those who gave up married life (*Ekanigis*) for service of the lord.

endowment for a perpetual lamp. For this purpose, he chose two Boyas belonging to Kaniti, a place situated at a distance of 10 miles from Simhachalam. He placed at their disposal 110 cows and gave a piece of low land for maintenance of cows on the condition that they in their turn maintained the endowment on his behalf.

The temple even from its inception began to acquire lands around the hill as a result of the endowments instituted by the devotees. The temple lands acquired in the early days were of the following varieties: (1) Land for raising flower gardens and (2) cultivable land. Early inscriptions invariably refer to the acquisition of the land near the tank at Adivivaram.<sup>29</sup> The very earliest inscription refers to the process of acquisition of lands. It mentions that the donor, a merchant, purchased the land near the tank and made it over to the treasury of the temple.

This process of acquisition of lands was greatly improved upon in course of time. The popularity of the temple grew and the royal patrons donated a number of villages to the temple, both for the *bhoga* and for the functionaries of the temple. The most important acquisitions of the medieval times are as follows:

(a) In Saka 1328 (A.D. 1406) Parvati Mahadevi, queen of Narasimha III, donated 300 *madras* in the *Bhandara* at *Kataka*, purchased the following lands in Kalingadesa and offered them to the Simhadrinatha<sup>30</sup>: (1) Anakapalle, (2) Avulapalli, (3) Pisinikavada, (4) Yeduvaka and (5) Mummadvada.

(b) In Saka 1441 (A.D. 1519) Krishnaraya of Vijayanagara made a gift of the following villages acquired by him from Prataparudra<sup>31</sup>: (1) Pedagani, (2) Aganampudi, (3) Adukkillepalli, (4) Gangavaram and (5) Pinaganampudi.

<sup>29</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1182 and 1183. Land is measured in ancient and medieval times not by the area but by its yield. *Khandika* or *putti* of land thus means the land yielding one *putti* (a measure equivalent to 80 bags of rice of 100 seers or 93 k.g. each). Thus in the area around Simhachalam, one *putti* of the wet-land was valued at *madras* i.e. 56 *tankas*. This rate is very much higher than the one prevalent in the East Godavari region, near Sarpavaram. From the inscriptions of Bhavanarayanaswami Temple at Sarpavaram (East Godavari Dt.), it can be deduced that the value of a *putti* of land is equivalent to 20 *tankas* (See S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 7 and 27).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, No. 731.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, No. 695.

In the earlier part of the 16th century, the temple possessed 10 villages. But all these were misappropriated during the last quarter of the 16th century when the life of the temple came to a stand-still. Asvaraya, an officer of the Kutb Shahis, in an effort to revive the glory of the temple, gifted once again the village of Narava for the *bhoga* of the Lord.<sup>32</sup> However, this too was not kept for long. During the close of 18th century Vijayaramaraju II, the ruler of Vizianagaram, made a gift of the following villages: (1) Simhachalam, (2) Adivivaram, (3) Gopalapatnam, (4) Iruvada, (5) Jerripotulapalem (6) Porlupalem, (7) Purushottamapuram, (8) Chimalapalli, (9) Venkatapuram, (10) Madhavadhara, (11) Munagada, (12) Buchirajulapalem, (13) Asakapalli and (14) Kapparada.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the temple possessed all the cultivable lands within a radius of 10 miles. However, the present century witnessed a number of changes. The area under cultivation grew by leaps and bounds. But with the Estate and Inam Abolition Act of 1948, the temple lands in most of the villages have been taken over by the Government. Now the temple possesses lands only in four villages. The entire Adivivaram is the property of the temple, and the temple also has lands in Vepagunta, Venkatapuram and Chimalapalli. Even now the temple is a big landholder and has about 4,000 acres of land. This includes, however, the mountain slopes, where pineapples and cashews are cultivated, and large tracks which are used only for growing fruits, like mangos and bananas. While there is considerable amount of land used for dry crops like Ganti and Chodi, wet land available for rice cultivation is limited.

**TENANCY IN MEDIEVAL TIMES:** Inscriptions mention that temple lands were demarcated by fixing the boundaries. Any one who tilled the lands had to supply specified quotas of commodities required by the temples for the supply of which the endowment was made. In Saka 1148 (A.D. 1226), Ganga Devi, queen of Bayya Raja of Viraghattam, endowed a certain piece of land to the temple and fixed the necessary boundaries.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1184.

<sup>33</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 1203 - nalugu dikkulayandu chakralanchanapu ralu panti (pati).

Those who tilled the land had to supply all the articles needed for the festival on each Ekadasi day. Thus those who tilled the temple lands had to pay a tax in kind, and it is invariably a commodity required by the temple. These articles which were deposited in the *Sribhandara* were measured by a measure (Narasimha Manika) specially maintained by the temple for the purpose.<sup>34</sup>

**VRITTI MANYA:** The temple servants and Brahmins engaged in the service of the temple often received lands free of tax. These are called *Vritti manyas*. Thus inscriptions mention land being given to the Boyas, the Dasaris, the Sanis and the Brahmins.<sup>35</sup> Many temples of Andhra have even now lands of this type, but this system was abolished in the modern times by the temple authorities. All the *inams* were abolished during the period between 1827 and 1848, when the estate was managed by the East India Company Government.

**THE PRESENT POSITION:** All the lands possessed by the temple have been assigned to tenants with full occupancy rights. The tenant enjoys the right of cultivation. This right is described as 'Kudivaram right'. The temple's right is that of the collection of rent, and is described as 'Melavaram right'.<sup>36</sup> The temple leases out the lands suitable for growing fruits and flowers. At present all the income that the temple gets on lands is received in cash.

**THE TEMPLE AS A CONSUMER:** The temple is a great consumer. It needs several articles for the daily *bhoga* and the various festivals of Lord. Rice, different grams, ghee, oil, tamarind, jaggery, sugar, chillies, mustard, pepper, camphor, salt, betel-leaf, areca-nut, milk, curds, honey and other articles are needed for the daily *bhoga*. Several special spices are used for making *tirtha*. Oil and camphor for the *dipa*, incense for *dhupa* and sandalwood paste (powder) for applying on the *mulavirat*, are also required. Besides the articles needed for ritual, the temple also needs firewood, bamboo posts, coir, cloth and other miscellaneous articles both for its needs on ordinary occasions as well as on festival occasions.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, Nos. 1200, 1201.

<sup>35</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 724, 865.

<sup>36</sup> Kudivaram and Melavaram are Tamil words. *Varam* means a share; *Kudi* stands for enjoyment and *Mela* for ownership.



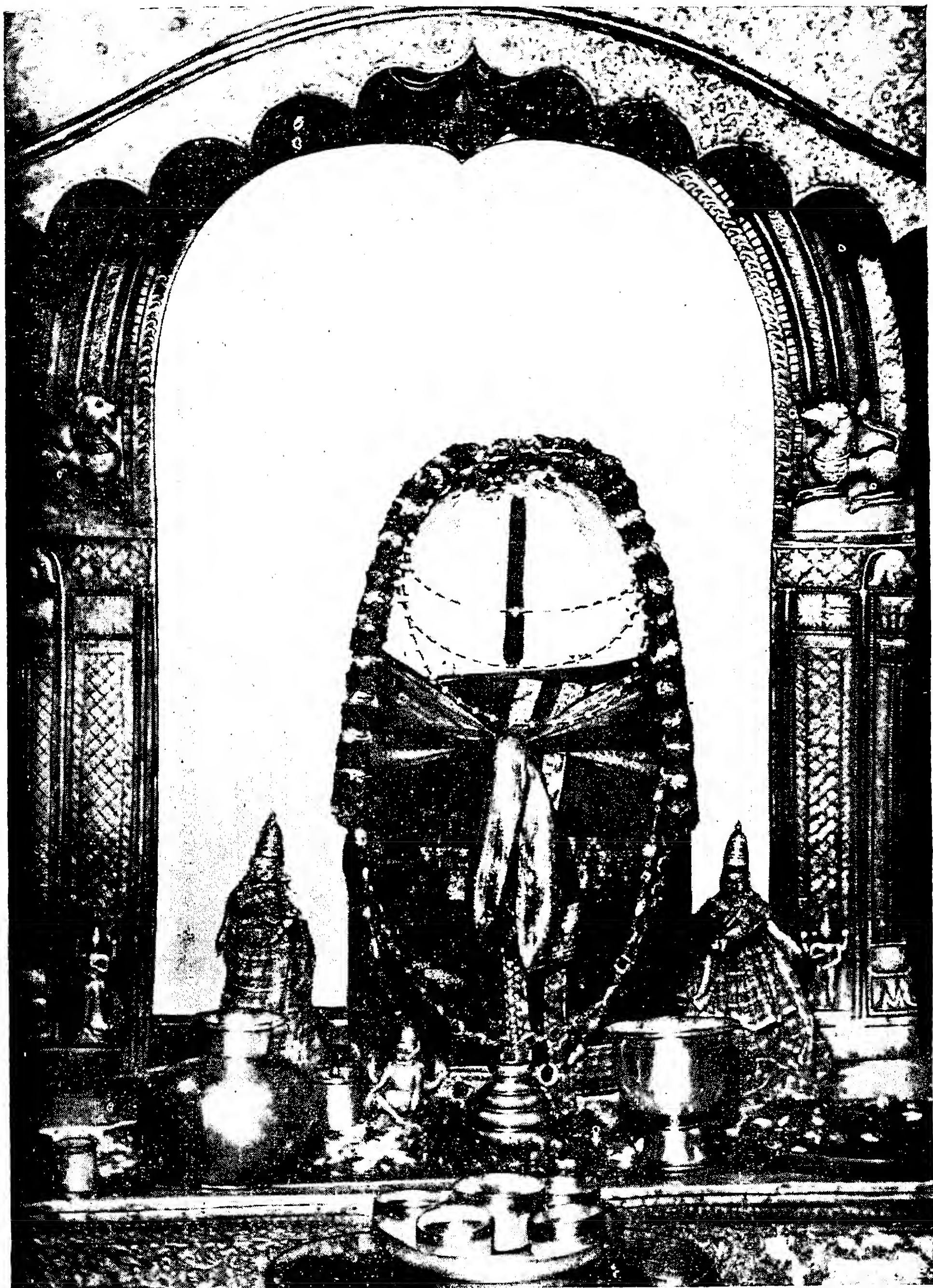


Fig. 22 : Varaha Narasimha (Nitya rupa)



Inscriptions from the beginning of the temple life mention the various articles that are needed for the *naivedya* of the Lord. An inscription of Saka 1123 (A. D. 1201) mentions that a *naivedya* with milk and the other accessory ingredients (*upakaranadravya*) were offered to the Lord.<sup>37</sup> Another inscription of Saka 1142 (A. D. 1230) is even more descriptive. It mentions that jaggery, pepper, betel-leaves and areca-nuts were offered to the Lord.<sup>38</sup> The nature of the demand increased as years went by. After the date of renovation, endowments were made for the offering of special *bhogas* to the Lord both on the ordinary as well as on festival days. These *bhogas* consisted to several types of food preparation: rice, cakes, pan-cakes, cakes made of different grams, rice and different curries, milk, different varieties of milk preparations and other special dishes.<sup>39</sup> It is thus natural if several articles are demanded by the temple for making these preparations. The inscription registering endowments made by Krishnaraya in A. D. 1519 enumerates the following articles needed for *angarangabhoga*: sandal paste, perfume, camphor, musk, rosewater, vermilion, rice, rice pudding, curries, rice-cakes, nine different varieties of puddings and different spices.<sup>40</sup>

During the medieval times, most of these articles were supplied by those who held the temple lands and special endowments. The temple probably purchased articles like sandalwood paste and different spices from weekly fairs (*santas*).<sup>41</sup> It is even possible that the temple entered into a contract with individual traders, since inscriptions mention traders from Kalingadesa.<sup>42</sup> At present these articles are purchased from the markets of Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Anakapalle. An amount

<sup>37</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1177.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, No. 1167.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, No. 1140 of Saka 1215 (A. D. 1293).

<sup>40</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 695.

<sup>41</sup> Inscriptions hailing from different parts of Medieval Andhra mention that *santas* were held regularly during that epoch. See M. S. Sarma, *History of Reddi Kingdom*, p. 393.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, Nos. 760, 880 mention merchants from Potnuru *Ponturuviti bhandara vyapari*. '*Bhandara vyapari*' means a trader who supplied articles to Sri Bhandara. Another inscription (No. 1021) mentions a trader from Simhagiri (Simhagirikomati).

ranging from Rs. 250/- to Rs. 300/- is spent every day on the *bhoga* of the Lord.

### *Temple's Role in the Economic Activity of the Region*

The temple, because of the assets it possesses, the services and commodities it needs, creates a great economic activity in the region around the area of Simhachalam. A great number of people depend on the land owned by the temple. A considerable number of people eke out their livelihood by maintaining various shops and stalls which cater to the needs of the pilgrims. The statement of 1834, which lists out the various functionaries maintained by the temple, mentions that 261 persons were engaged in various services connected with the temple. Besides those who are connected with the ritual of the temple, the temple maintained 12 persons to carry the miscellaneous articles from the village at the foot of the hill to the top of the hill. It also maintained a person for garland-making, another for patrolling, and still another for announcing time. It also maintained 3 men for taking care of the elephant belonging to the temple. Even though some of these offices have been discontinued during the course of the present century; the temple maintains a number of people for keeping watch of the property on the hill and number of peons for carrying on different duties. The offices connected with the temple have also expanded employing a number of clerks and other officials. The newly developed transport system provides employment for a number of persons.

ARTISANS: Each medieval temple maintained artisans like stone-masons, carpenters, blacksmiths and goldsmiths.<sup>43</sup> A few inscriptions of the medieval times from the temple also mention artisans like the Proloju, the Appoju and the Jantoju.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 663 of the time of Velanati Coda II (A.D. 1163 – A.D. 1180) mentions '*devarakabharanam chesedivaru*' (those who made ornaments for the Lord) among the servants kept by the Mulasthan temple at Nadendal (Narasaraopet Taluk, Guntur District). The Chebrolu inscription of Jayapa Nayaka of Saka 1135 mentions all the five types of artisans: The *Vaddagi* (carpenter), the *Kammari* (black-smith), the *Kasevadu* (stone-mason). These artisans received vrittis of land like other functionaries of the temple. E. Ind. Vol. V.

<sup>44</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 944, 945. The artisans of the medieval times usually bore the suffixes of *Oju* (*vikriti*) derived from of 'ojja' or 'upadhyaya', as, for example, Akkasala Kamoju ('Kamoju' the goldsmith).

The *uttama sringara pariksha* or the examiner of the ornaments, mentioned by an inscription of the 14th century must be a goldsmith. The statement of 1834 mentions that all these craftsmen were maintained by the temple. At present, though these craftsmen are not permanently employed, their services are requisitioned from time to time. Recently, the temple employed a number of craftsmen for the renovation of the central shrine.

GARDENERS AND OTHER SERVANTS: The temple used to employ a number of men for looking after the gardens. They received *vrittis* of *prasada*. An inscription of the 13th century mentions an inspector of gardens (*totaparikshaka*).<sup>45</sup> The statement of 1834 mentions that the temple employed 26 *malis* and a supervisor (*daroga*). Even now the temple maintains 30 *malis* and a superintendent. Four *malis* are maintained at the recently started cattle-house (*gosala*).

Thus the temple is today a vast organization creating a number of opportunities for employment. Though some of the traditional services like those of the Devadasis and artisans are now dispensed with, the temple creates many other opportunities of employment for a number of people in its constructional activities, transport system, educational institutions, administration and other services connected with the temple. It is no exaggeration to say that it affects the economic life of the people in the region around Simhachalam profoundly.

### *Cultural Role of the Temple*

The temple was the custodian of all the liberal arts in medieval times. Residing on the premises of the temple were religious savants propagating Vaishnavism. Brahmins engaged in teaching the *veda*, *purana*, *nataka* and other disciplines. There were singers, musicians and dancers to sing and dance in the presence of the Lord. There were also the *mathas* which acted as free boarding, houses. It appears as though the whole atmosphere of the temple was resonating with the recital of the traditional lore on one side and music, song and dance on the other. The lengthy inscription of the reign of Narasimha II of *Saka* 1213 which registers various endowments and gifts of his officer

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, No. 1144.

Narayan Senapati is a record of the utmost importance in this connection.<sup>46</sup>

VEDIC LEARNING : The earliest inscription to refer to the cultivation of Veda on the premises of the temple is dated Saka 1123 (A.D. 1201).<sup>47</sup> The record mentions an endowment for the teachers who taught the Yajur Veda. Study of Yajur Veda was also mentioned in the inscription of the 13th century already cited above.<sup>48</sup> It records an endowment for brahmins who were experts in teaching the *Khandava* and *Taittiriya* branches of the Yajur Veda. In two inscriptions of the 14th century figure two teachers of Veda. The earlier inscription describes one Krishnadeva as a person who was well-versed in the Vedas while the later mentions one Peddi Bhotlu who assigned the job of training all the Brahmins of the Kshetra in the study of the Veda.<sup>49</sup> These records show that in medieval times, the Veda, particularly, the Yajur Veda was studied on the premises of the temple. The importance given to Yajur Veda can be explained as follows : Yajur Veda consisting mainly of ritualistic texts is effective in stabilising the Vedic tradition which was needed at the time when Islam was already established in India. The study of the Veda obtains even now both in the precincts of the temple and in the Agama Pathasala.

THE PURANAS, KAVYAS AND OTHER TRADITIONAL LORE : The inscription of Narayana Senapati of Saka 1213 (A.D. 1291) records endowments for three brahmins engaged in the study of *purana*, *kavya*, *nataka* and other similar disciplines.<sup>50</sup> Two records of 14th century refer to the recital of the *Sahasra Nama* and the Narasimha Kavacha.<sup>51</sup> In A.D. 1350, Kesava Bhagavata, a man of learning, received a share in the *prasada* for reciting the Purusha Sukta at the time of the sacred 'bath' of the Lord.<sup>52</sup> Another inscription mentions that an officer of the Gangas purchased a *vritti* of *prasada* from the temple and

<sup>46</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 904.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, No. 1177.

<sup>48</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 904.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, Nos. 780 and 1096 – Srinarasimhakshetramandu sakalamayina brahmanulakunnu vedadhyayanamu cheyinchekorakai.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, No. 904.

<sup>51</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 839 and 1022.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, No. 967 – Abhiskekasya samaye nrhareh prativasaram pathitum paurasham suktamadadekanibhandakamu.

made it over to one Varadabhatta who was required to recite the *Vishnu Stotra* in the presence of the Lord.<sup>53</sup>

RELIGIOUS TEACHERS – NARAHARITIRTHA : Narahari Tirtha, the famous Madhwa divine flourished in the Kalinga region in the 13th century and contributed much to the growth of the two Vaishnava shrines of medieval Kalinga, the Srikurma Kshetra and the Simhachala Kshetra. A many-sided genius, Narahari was saint, scholar and statesman. He is the saint who assumed not only the high pontifical office of the Madhwa seat at Udipi but is known to have composed devotional songs on Raghupati Vitthala exhorting *bhakti* as a means of realizing the Almighty.<sup>54</sup> He also wrote commentaries on Sri Madhwa's works.<sup>55</sup> Being also a great statesman he served the Ganga kings of Kalinga in the capacity of a minister. For gleaning the facts of his life, the inccriptions from the two Vaishnava temples at Srikurmam and Simhachalam, spread over a period of 30 years from A. D. 1264 to A. D. 1294, are of immense help. A traditional account of the sage is given in the work *Narahari Yati stotra*, and a short reference to him is also contained in the *Madhwa Vijaya Kavya* of Narayana Pandita.

Inscriptions from the Srikurmam temple bear out that Narahari Tirtha was born in a family which served the kings in the capacity of ministers. In a record A.D. 1271, he is described with the title "the aged *sachiva*" (*mudcsali sachiva*).<sup>56</sup> The same inscription mentions that Narahari Tirtha donated a village to brahmins for the welfare of Bhanudeva II of the Ganga dynasty.<sup>57</sup> In another record of A. D. 1281, it is said that he followed the profession of his father, viz., of practising statecraft in a righteous manner.<sup>58</sup> On the above evidence it may be stated that Narahari Tirtha acted as a minister to Bhanudeva I (A. D. 1264–78) and Narasimha II (A. D. 1278–1305), the Ganga kings who ruled Kalinga with their capital at Varanasi Kataka. It is perhaps in this capacity that he saved the country from the

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, No. 1022.

<sup>54</sup> See J.I.H., Vol. XV, *The Hindu Religious movements of Medieval Deccan*, p. 105.

<sup>55</sup> S.I.I.N. Das Gupta, *The History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV.

<sup>56</sup> S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 1233.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> E. Ind. Vol. VI, pp. 260–8.



invasion of Sabaras, as is reported in the inscription of A. D. 1281.

The *Madhwa Vijaya Kavya* of Narayana Pandita corroborates the account of the sage that can be constructed on the basis of the evidence of inscriptions. It states that Sri Madhwa undertook a tour all over India to propagate his sect of religion. While passing in through Kalinga, he converted two great scholars Sobhana Bhatta (Padmanabha Tirtha) and Shama Sastri (Narahari Tirtha) who became his successors to the pontifical office at Udipi.<sup>59</sup> For the date of this accession to the office at Udipi, one has to depend entirely on the traditional works and lists preserved in the *mathas* which give the duration of the pontificate of each teacher. On a careful examination of the sources the late Mr. H. Krishna Sastri fixed A. D. 1324 as the date of accession of Narahari Tirtha to the pontifical seat.<sup>60</sup> Narahari Tirtha's demise took place seven years later.

The account of the sage contained in the *Narahari Yati stotra*, though elaborate, contains a great amount of fiction usual in panegyric *stotra* works. The account runs thus : Narahari Tirtha, whose original name was Shama Sastri, received initiation into the Madhwa faith from the great sage Sri Madhwacharya. The learned Guru ordered his disciple Narahari Tirtha to go over to the Kalinga country and fetch him the sacred images of Rama and Sita. Accordingly, Narahari proceeded to Kalinga, stayed there for 12 years acting as a regent to the young prince of the Kalinga country, claimed the images of Rama and Sita as a reward for his services to the state and handed them over to his spiritual master. The *stotra* adds that Narahari Tirtha succeeded to the pontifical seat after Padmanabha Tirtha and spent the last part of his life on the banks of the Tungabhadra in the Kannada country.<sup>61</sup> Though Narahari Tirtha's succession to the pontifical seat is beyond dispute, the purpose of his visit to Kalinga and the subsequent regency of 12 years in the Kalinga country appear to be mere fiction. The *stotra* postulates that Narahari Tirtha's stay in Kalinga was long. The drift of the inscriptions, the length of the period covered by

<sup>59</sup> Madhwa Vijaya Kavya, verse 33 ff.

<sup>60</sup> See E. Ind. Vol. VI, p. 264.

<sup>61</sup> *Stotramahodadhi* (Nirnaya Sagar Press).

them and the evidence of *Madhwa Vijaya Kavya* show on the other hand that he belonged to Kalinga region, and took to ascetic orders after coming into contact with Sri Madhwa.

Narahari Tirtha's contribution to the religious life of medieval Kalinga was great. Apart from spreading the cult of *Bhakti* in the whole land, he set up images of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana in Srikurmeswara temple.<sup>62</sup> He was also responsible for building a shrine on the precincts of the Kurmeswara temple and for consecrating Yogananda Narasimha therein.<sup>63</sup> As he was connected with royal court of the Gangas, he could easily prevail upon the kings and their feudatories to make grants to the temples of the land. Thus he induced Jayanta, the Matsya chief of the *Oddadi desa*, to make a gift of a piece of cultivable land to the Simhachalam Temple.<sup>64</sup> Another contribution of Narahari Tirtha to the Simhachalam Temple lay in establishing a *matha* at the temple which continued to flourish even after his demise.<sup>65</sup> It is probable that he acted as the first *bhoga pariksha* of the temple.<sup>66</sup>

Narahari Tirtha, according to tradition, is said to be the first of the *dasas* who promoted a sect which later acquired the name of 'Dasakuta'. He appears to have composed an anthology of verses called *Naraharipravachanamulu* and songs in praise of Raghupati Vithala. Though these works have never seen the light of the day, it can be inferred that Narahari Tirtha laid the foundations for the *Bhakti* movement at Simhachalam.

OTHER RELIGIOUS TEACHERS: Narahari Tirtha was followed by a number of Madhwa saints who made the temple life active by occupying the position of the highest spiritual dignitary of the temple (*bhoga pariksha*). Varadagiri Sripadulu, who flourished in the last decades of the 13th century and early decades of the 14th, was one such religious teacher. In an endowment placed for the benefit of the temple, this religious teacher received the first share in the distribution of *prasada*.<sup>67</sup> Another such person

<sup>62</sup> S.I.I. Vol. V, No. 1172.

<sup>63</sup> E. Ind. Vol. VI, pp. 260-8.

<sup>64</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 943.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, No. 1025 of A.D. 1373.

<sup>66</sup> See supra chapter VI, 129 ff.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, No. 941, 1228 and 1000 - Simhadri Bhogapariksha, Varadagiri Sripadamulu.

who flourished in the middle of 14th century was Narasimha Bharati who also acted as *bhoga pariksha* of the temple. He commanded such great respect that a person hailing from Jagannadhapura in *Odyadesa* (Orissa) made an endowment in the temple requesting Narasimha Bharati to worship the Lord on behalf of his progeny.<sup>68</sup> Again in an inscription of *Saka* 1275 (A.D. 1373) figures another Madhwa Saint named Jagannadha Tirtha, a resident of Naraharimatha. Finally, an inscription of the year A.D. 1390 mentions Raga Bharati, a disciple of Vasudeva Bharati, who was respected even by the reigning king. Narasimha III (A.D. 1326–52) of the Ganga dynasty made an endowment for the enjoyment of Raga Bharati so that he might worship the Lord for the welfare of the king.<sup>69</sup>

MATHAS: On the precincts of the temple, a few monasteries (*mathas*) were established. A *matha*, like the *vihara* of the Buddhist creed, is a monastic establishment, and was meant to propagate different religious creeds of Hinduism. In Andhra, the earliest powerful *matha* was the Golaki *matha* which flourished under the patronage of the Kakatiyas. The Golaki *mathas*, established under the inspiration of a Saiva divine, Visveswara Sambhu, propagated Saivism throughout Andhra during the 13th century.<sup>70</sup> In a similar fashion, the *matha* started by Narahari Tirtha propagated Vaishnavism. The provision for setting up of special head of the *matha* and also for its maintenance is mentioned in a donation made to the temple in A. D. 1291.<sup>71</sup> Narasimha Bharati established another *matha* and made an endowment for its maintenance by placing all the lands acquired by him at the disposal of the management. The succeeding generations of his disciples were enjoined to look after the *matha* and received the benefits of the endowments.<sup>72</sup> The *mathas* of the time were quite well off and could give free boarding to as many as 30 brahmins.<sup>73</sup>

No information about the *mathas* is available after the 14th century. According to tradition, there used to be a Jiyar *matha*

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, No. 858.

<sup>69</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 1025 of A.D. 1373.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, No. 859 of A.D. 1390.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, Vol. X, No. 343.

<sup>72</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, No. 904.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, No. 892 of A.D. 1358.



Fig. 23 : Varaha  
— Courtesy : Arch. Survey of India

at Simhachalam established by Vaishnava Jiyars.<sup>74</sup>

The *mathas* of the medieval times served the useful functions of feeding the needy. Even in the modern times, the *satra* and the *Ramanujakutam* fulfil this function in a moderate way. The statement of 1834 mentions that the temple gave charities for 20 persons. Even today nearly, ten deserving persons are given free lodging and Boarding facilities.

**MUSIC AND DANCE:** Just as the royal court of the medieval times gave patronage not only to men of learning but to the cultivation of liberal arts too, so also the medieval temple extended its patronage to music and dance. As observed by Dr. V. Raghavan, it is probable that the temple played a greater role than the royal court in encouraging the liberal arts.<sup>75</sup> An inscription of the time of Vishnuvardhana III (A.D. 718-52) of the Eastern Chalukyan dynasty specifically mentions that one of the reasons for making endowments to the temples is to encourage the cultivation of liberal arts.<sup>76</sup> Again the fact that almost all of the medieval temples encouraged liberal arts can also be known from the panels of dancers and musicians depicted on the pillars of the *mandapas* and the walls of the temples.

The sculpture of the Simhachalam Temple is replete with panels depicting musicians and dancers. On the outer walls of the *Vimana* are depicted a female dancer dancing to the tune of a male drummer. Panels depicting a dancing party consisting of four female drummers, a male dancer and three female dancers, are carved around a pillar in front of the *mukhamandapa*. What is today called the *kalyanamandapa* was in fact the *natyamandapa* of the medieval times. On the pillars of this *mandapa* and on the outer compartments of the plinth are depicted scenes of song and dance.<sup>77</sup>

Inscriptions from the temple confirm the existence of dancers and musicians. An inscription of A. D. 1390 mentions an endowment for the benefit of Garudadasa for singing in the presence of the Lord from the time of the sacred bath to the

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. No. 904.

<sup>75</sup> Sri V. Raghavan, *Telugu Vijnanasarvaswam*, Vol. III, p. 694.

<sup>76</sup> Unpublished inscription of Vishnuvardhana III of Eastern Chalukyan dynasty - *gayaka natyacharyavilasinijanabhrtaye* - quoted from *History of Reddi Kingdoms*, p. 305.

<sup>77</sup> See Figure No. 7.



time of the incense offering.<sup>78</sup> Another inscription of the 15th century refers to a *natyacharya* who had the title 'Abhinava Bharata'.<sup>79</sup> Numerous inscriptions record donations made to the Devadasis attached to the temple for singing and dancing in the presence of the Lord.<sup>80</sup>

**SANIS AND THE TEMPLE:** The account of the temple in the medieval times would not be complete unless a survey is made of the cultural role which the Devadasis or Sanis played in the life of the temple. The practice of appointing dancers in the temple goes back to the 8th century.<sup>81</sup> Since this particular sect of the medieval society were the custodians of the arts of dance and music, their services were needed for the *rangabhoga* of the Lord. Even at an early age they were betrothed to the Lord of the temple by a special ritual, and they spent their lives by singing devotional songs and dancing religious themes in the temple.<sup>82</sup>

The Sanis enjoyed a high social status in the medieval times in Andhra. A tenth century copper-plate mentions the fact that Chalukya Bhima of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty honoured a courtesan called Challava for her proficiency in music (*gan-dharva vidya*).<sup>83</sup> Another king of the Velanadu family married a courtesan attached to one of the temples of the land.<sup>84</sup> The status of the Sanis in temple life was such that they were sometimes placed at the helm of the temple administration in some temples of the coastal Andhra.<sup>85</sup> No wonder thus if in an inscription from the Simhachalam Temple a religious teacher makes an endowment for the enjoyment of a Sani of the temple.<sup>86</sup>

The earliest inscription to refer to the Sanis is the one belonging to the 13th century which informs that Narasimha Deva I

<sup>78</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 722.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, No. 1091.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, Nos. 1134 and 1050.

<sup>81</sup> Unpublished copper-plate inscription of Vishnuvardhana III. See *History of Reddi Kingdoms*, p. 305.

<sup>82</sup> This ritual by which the Sanis are initiated in the service of the temple, is described in K. K. Pillay's *the Suchindrum Temple*, 281 ff.

<sup>83</sup> *Journal of the Telugu Academy*, No. XI, p. 255.

<sup>84</sup> See *Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi*, p. 287.

<sup>85</sup> No. 890.

<sup>86</sup> No. 1137.

arranged for a band of 100 Sanis to serve the Lord by singing in his presence (*strinam satamakalpayat*).<sup>87</sup> A number of endowments were made throughout the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries in their favour. The inscriptions of the temple differentiate Sanis into two categories: those who were enrolled in a *sampradaya* and those who were not. Thus we find that an endowment for *chamaraseva* made in A. D. 1381 was to be maintained by Srirama of the Sanis and Kodepa of the *sampradaya*.<sup>88</sup> Another inscription refers likewise to Gangasani and Yerrasani as members of the *Sampradaya*.<sup>89</sup>

In the service of the Lord, the most important duty of the Sanis was the *Vinjamara Seva* (fan-service). They had to accompany the Lord when he was taken around the village on festive occasions. Many inscriptions record endowments for this *seva*.<sup>90</sup> The Sanis also sang songs of benediction in the presence of the Lord from the early morning till the time the Lord finishes his bath and throughout the entire period of *archana* during the night. Again some of them were employed for playing instrumental music at the time of the morning service.<sup>91</sup> Finally they were also engaged for dancing in the presence of the Lord.<sup>92</sup>

The Sanis of the temple were proficient in music and dance. They were not only well-versed in vocal music but were proficient in instrumental music. An inscription of the early 14th century graphically describes a musical party composed of Sanis. This party consisted of drummers, cymbal players and pipers.<sup>93</sup> The panels of singers and dancers depicted on the pillars of assembly-hall and marriage-hall must be those of the Devadasis.

The Sanis continued to dominate the temple life throughout the medieval times. Though with a lesser prestige, they continued to exist in the temple even in the modern era. The

<sup>87</sup> No. 818 – *sanulayandu srirama, sampradayamandu kodepa*.

<sup>88</sup> No. 764.

<sup>89</sup> Nos. 751, 705, 740.

<sup>90</sup> No. 982 – *prabhatamu torakoni tirumajjana avasaramu chellinantannu. tannu*.

<sup>91</sup> No. 1088 – *tiruvajamuniravakasa avasaramulandulamu vinavadyam seva-chesi andukai*.

<sup>92</sup> No. 1050.

<sup>93</sup> No. 1052.

statement of 1834 shows that 8 Sanis were employed in the service of the temple. But as the system degenerated and as many of the dancers led a profligate life, a public agitation developed during the course of this century for the abolition of the practice. The temple authorities alive to the criticism slowly disbanded the dancers engaged in the service of the temple. During the second quarter of the present century only two remained in the service of the temple. Even these were discontinued after the prohibition of the system by an Act in 1947.<sup>94</sup>

It cannot be said that the temple is now playing the same cultural role as it played in medieval times. Though it now extends its patronage to the study of the *Veda*, *Purana*, *Itihasa* and *Agama*, it does not maintain the vast array of musicians, singers and dancers which it used to maintain. On the other hand, it now spends liberally to encourage Sanskrit education, charitable institutions and other temples.

**THE TEMPLE AS A RELIGIOUS CENTRE :** The temple acted as a meeting place of men hailing from different places and pursuing different vocations. In medieval times, the majority of its devotees hailed from the Odda country (Orissa). A number of inscriptions refer to traders, lay devotees and royal officers hailing from Varanasi Kataka.<sup>95</sup> It is no wonder thus if the language of the inscriptions shows the influence of the Oriya language.<sup>96</sup> Special arrangement for singing in the presence of the Lord in Odyia (Orissan) style was obtaining in later medieval times.<sup>97</sup> Though such contact has disappeared in the modern era, the temple continues to hold special attraction to people of Orissa.

The Simhachalam temple used to attract people from all the places within a radius of about thirty miles. The most important among the places were Oddadi and Elamanchi (the present Vaddadi and Yellamanchili). Because of the interest

<sup>94</sup> Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication Act. of 1947, Manual of Civil Laws, Andhra Pradesh, p. 763.

<sup>95</sup> Nos. 750 and 760 mention Kalinga Vyaparis, No. 774 mentions a private individual from Varanasi Kataka. A number of inscriptions mention Kalinga parikshas (Nos. 772, 725, etc.)

<sup>96</sup> See *infra*, chapter XI.

<sup>97</sup> No. 722.

shown by the chiefs of Oddadi and Elamanchi to the temple, people from these places used to visit the temple regularly.<sup>98</sup>

There was also a movement of people between Simhachalam and places like Narava, Yerada (modern Yarada), Kaniti and Yendurtti (Pendurthi) and Dimile situated nearby.<sup>99</sup>

Even though at present there is a continuous flow of population between Visakhapatnam and Simhachalam, the same situation did not obtain in medieval times. There is only a single inscription of the 15th century among the entire body of inscriptions which makes a reference to Visakhapatnam.<sup>100</sup> Visakhapatnam which gained some importance in the early Chalukya Chola times lapsed into neglect shortly afterwards. No reference to the town, other than in the inscriptions of the 12th and 13th centuries hailing from Visakhapatnam and Simhachalam, can be found.<sup>101</sup> Its importance however grew by leaps and bounds after the arrival of the British and the development of the settlement. The remarkable growth of Visakhapatnam during the present century has been to the advantage of Simhachalam and contributed to its development. Today, thanks to its all-round development, Simhachalam is attracting numerous pilgrims each day. The number of pilgrims runs to tens of thousands on festival days.

Though men from all walks of life and all parts of the country used to visit the temple, till recently the temple entry was denied to so called untouchables, *avarnas* like the Malas and the Madigas. It is noteworthy however that no distinction was made among the four principal castes and they could enter the central shrine after the completion of the ritual. Even this restriction was removed in 1948 when the temple entry was proclaimed by law as the right of all including the *avarnas*. The trustee, Sri P. V. G. Raju, took initiative in this matter and personally led the procession of untouchables into the temple in 1948. Since then the temple has been enjoying the patronage of all.

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<sup>98</sup> Nos. 827, 858.

<sup>99</sup> Nos. 1144, 1040, 824 and 865.

<sup>100</sup> No. 779.

<sup>101</sup> S.I. I. Vol. X, Nos. 211, 651. See also A.R.E. II, 45 and S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 1175 and 779.

# Architecture

## SECTION I

The architecture of the Simhachalam Temple is not homogeneous. The shifting nature of the political history of the area and the lack of any definite style of architecture indigenous to this area made it open to several influences. The Visakhapatnam District (Madhyama Kalinga) of the medieval times was subject to cultural influences of the Gangas of Orissa, on one hand, and of the Chalukyas of Vengi, the Cholas of Tanjore and the Kakatiyas of Warangal, on the other. Even by the first half of the 11th century, the Dravidian style of the Cholas began to influence the architectural style of the capital city (Mukhalingam) of the Gangas.<sup>1</sup> Particularly the Bhimesvara shrine at Mukhalingam built probably in the first quarter of the 11th century shows unmistakable influence of the

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<sup>1</sup> The silpa sastras or ancient Hindu texts on art distinguish three styles of architecture – the Nagara, the Vesara and the Dravida. The names owe their origin to the regions in which the respective styles have arisen. The texts mention that the Nagara style prevailed in North India, the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, the Dravida style in South India, the region between the river Krishna and Kanyakumari. The sharp difference that can be noticed between the extant temples of North India and South India in the manner of their construction justifies this classification. But with reference to Vesara, the classification is inadequate. Though some of the texts like the *Kamikagama* (See, *Kamikagama*, Chapter XLIX 1/2) mention that the Vesara style is the one that prevailed in the country between the river Krishna and the Vindhyas, no separate style can readily be recognized in the extant temples of the region. The temples exhibit features borrowed from both the North as well as the South Indian temple styles with a local colouring added to them. Hence the style is aptly described as Chalukyan after the royal dynasty under whose inspiration the many temples of the region were built. It may also be described as the Deccanese style after the name of the locality. See S. K. Saratwati, “*The History and Culture of Indian People*”, Vol. V, p. 530.



Dravidian style in the construction of its base, the wall portion and the entire frontal porch (*mukhamandapa*).<sup>2</sup> A little later a purely Dravidian temple based on the principle of a square ground plan and three tiered tower (*samachaturasra tritala vimana*) was built at Srikurmam.<sup>3</sup> It is no wonder then that the Simhachalam temple, renovated in the 13th century, exhibits a mixture of the Orissan as well as Dravidian schools of architecture. There are also features which can again be traced to the Deccanese style and which were imported as a consequence of contacts between the kings of Orissa and the Kakatiyas of the Deccan in the 13th century.

**THE MODERN RENOVATION:** A note of caution must be made in any attempt to describe the architectural features of the Simhachalam temple. For, the entire tower of the central shrine as well as the frontal porch have been plastered with cement. Though we can perceive the original design even now, it is not wise to attempt for this reason minute comparisons with contemporary monuments.

**THE TWO STYLES:** As the temple combines in itself the architectural features of the Nagara style as developed in the region of Orissa and the Dravida style as it obtained in Tamilnad, a description of the salient features of both the styles makes matters clear. Fortunately, in these instances we have both the indigenous texts and extant temples to enable us to describe the features of each style with appropriate designations. If the *Bhuvanapradipa* supplies the nomenclature for the Orissan temples, the *Tantrasamuchchaya* and other texts help us to name the limbs (*angas*) of the Dravidian temple.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Bhimesvara temple at Mukhalingam is described in the records of the temple, which are fourteen in all, as 'Aniyanka Bhimesvara' temple. (See S. I. I. Vol. V, Nos. 1135, 36 etc.). As this is the name of the Ganga king Vajrahasta II (A. D. 981-1016), it is probable that it was built by him in the beginning of the 11th century. The sculptural and architectural evidence supports this conclusion. See Douglas Barret, "The Mukhalingam Temples", p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> The evidence of the inscriptions, the earliest of them being dated in S. 1035 = A. D. 1113 (No. 1316, S. I. I. Vol. V.), and the architectural features show that the temple came into existence at the beginning of the 12th century.

<sup>4</sup> For *Bhuvanapradipa*, See N. K. Bose, 'Canons of Orissan Architecture' *Tantrasamuchchaya* is translated and annotated upon by N. K. Mallya in his *Studies in Sanskrit texts on Temple Architecture*.

As the temple is conceived by the Hindus as the body of the Cosmic Being, the designations correspond to the limbs of the human body.

**THE ORISSAN TEMPLE:** A typical Orissan temple is composed of two portions, a sanctum and a frontal porch. Both of these structures have a spire and are raised on a square ground plan and lie on the same axis. The central shrine with its curvilinear spire is known in Orissan terminology as *Rekha Deul*. This is because the *Rekha Deul*, with its emphasis on the vertical line, gives the appearance of a continuous line (*Rekha*). It is sometimes called as the big temple (*Bada Deul*). The frontal porch with its roof arranged like a pyramid with receding tiers (known as *pidhas*) is described in various terms: the temple composed of tiers (*Pidha Deul*) the auspicious one (*Bhadra Deul*) and the one which pleases the whole world (*Jagmohana*). In fully developed temples of this style (for example, the Lingaraja Temple at Bhubanesvar), two more structures, the dancing-hall (*nata-mandir*), the hall of offerings (*bhogamandir*) are added. These two structures usually lie on the same axis and resemble the *Pidha Deul*.

**THE PROJECTIONS:** One peculiarity that attracts even a casual observer is the difference between the inside and outside walls of the Orissan temple. The inside wall of the central shrine is like any ordinary wall, but the outside walls are interrupted by projections. When the exterior face has only one projection the outside wall is divided into three sections. These sections are known as segments (*rathakas* or *pagas*). The temple itself is designated as the three-segmented temple (*triratha* temple). The projections could be of any number, and so we have temples of different types: the three-segmented (*triratha*), the five-segmented (*pancharatha*), the seven-segmented (*saptaratha*) and so on depending on the number of projections. The segments of the temple are important architectural components, and they run from base to top partaking in all phases of the elevation of the temple.

A typical Orissan temple is vertically divided into three parts, the base (*bada*), the trunk (*gandi*) and the apex (*mastaka*). The stylobate is also to be found in some temples, but it is an optional component. The base of the *Rekha* temple is

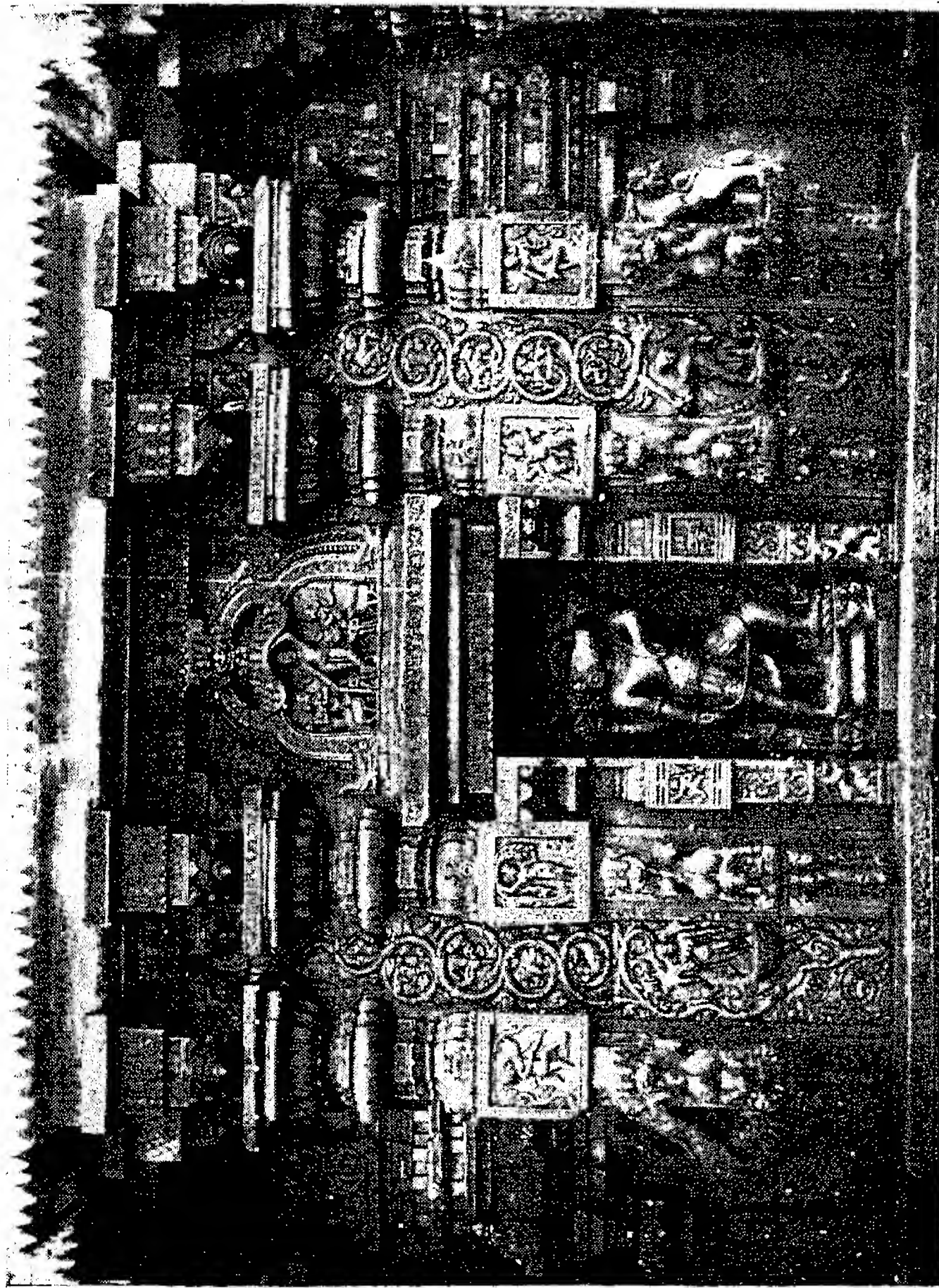


Fig. 24: Varaha (on the Outer Wall of the Central Shrine)

similar to the *Pidha* temple ; it consists of horizontal mouldings (*pabhaga*), shin (*jangha*) and another set of mouldings which mark off the trunk from the base (*baranda*). The trunk of *Rekha* temple runs vertically for a short distance almost in a straight line but then begins to curve inwards quickly to present a curvilinear appearance. As a relief from the monotony of the vertical movement, and to underline symbolic upper progress, the outer-most segment of the trunk is divided into a number of horizontal mouldings. Each section is surmounted by a fluted disc, which is in fact a miniature reproduction of a similar one at the apex. On the other segments, miniature replicas of the entire apex are carved. The trunk of a *Bhadra* Temple, on the other hand, is composed of a number of horizontal platforms called tiers (*pidhas*) piled up in the form of a pyramid. Upper tiers come to almost one half of the size of the lowest one. To interpose the thoroughly horizontal movement the tiers are sometimes arranged in two or three groups called *potalas* with an intervening vertical section of moderate height called *kanti*.

**THE CROWNING PART :** The apex of *Rekha Deul* begins with a neck (*beki*) which joins the trunk to other members the fluted disc (*amla*), the skull (*khapuri*), the water-pot (*kalasa*) and the weapon of the deity (*ayudha*). The apex of a *Pidha Deul*, on the other hand, has an additional member of rather imposing size, namely, the bell (*ghanta*), which is placed above the *beki*. After the bell, comes the usual members, a *beki*, an *amla*, a *khapuri*, a *kalasa* and an *ayudha*.

**INTERNAL CONSTRUCTION :** The internal construction of the cella of the Orissan temples was undertaken with a practical view to endow the structure with strength. The vertical height of the temple is punctuated by ceilings, the lower-most starting at a distance of nearly 20 ft. from the ground level. The number of ceilings varied in accordance with the height of the temple. In each case, the hollow space over these ceilings constitutes itself into a chamber, access to which is often provided through a corbelled arch over the entrance gate of *garbhagrha*.

**THE DRAVIDIAN TEMPLE :** The Dravidian temple is also composed of two principal parts—the central shrine and the front porch. In the Dravidian scheme, only the sanctum has a spire



and the entire structure is described as the Immeasurable One (*vimana*). The front porch is usually a flat pillared hall, and is described as *mukhamandapa*. The spire over the sanctum of the Dravidian temple resembles a storied pyramid with horizontal tiers which recede in size as they go up to the crowning member, called the apex (*sikhara*). There is an emphasis on the horizontal lines in Dravidian temples, and this contrasts with the vertical emphasis of the Rekha temple of Orissa. The walls of the Dravida temple usually do not have any projections. The ground plan of the temple is thus usually either a square or a rectangle, and this contrasts with the projections on the walls and the cross shape of the ground plan of an Orissan temple. Again internal construction of the Dravida temple presents no ceiling in the sanctum, while this obtains in the Orissan temple. Finally the use of pillars is strictly limited in Orissan temples while it is the regular feature of Dravidian temples.

**VERTICAL DIVISION :** The central shrine of a Dravidian temple is divided into six limbs. On the vertical axis from bottom to the top they are the base (*adhisthana*), the foot (*pada* or *bhitti*), the entablature (*prastara*), the neck (*griva*), the apex (*sikhara*) the finial (*stupi*). The *adhisthana* is composed of horizontal mouldings. The wall rises vertically with pilasters. The entablature is composed of a cornice (*kapota*) a stringed course of griffin heads (*bhutali*) and a row of miniature square shrines (*kutas*), oblong wagon-topped shrines (*salas*) and miniature pavilions (*panjaras*). This pattern is repeated over again on the tapering portion on each *tier* of the central shrine. The neck is a vertical member and connects the final *tala* of the shrine with the fifth member, the apex. Just over this apex is placed the finial (*stupi*) which is usually either a *chakra* or *trisula*.

**THE VIMANA :** A Dravidian shrine is often described as *tritāla vimana*, *pañchatāla vimana* and so on. These names indicate the number of tiers that the temple has over its tapering body. Thus a *pañchatāla vimana* has five tiers. Depending on the shape of the apex once again the shrine is described as the *Nagara* or the *Vesara* or the *Dravida*. If the shape of the apex is a square, then it is of a *Nagara* type ; if round, a *Vesara*, and if octagonal



it is purely of a *Dravida* variety.

OTHER FEATURES : In a Dravidian temple, the pillared halls are used for every conceivable purpose : for the bathing service, for the wedding ceremony and the like, connected with the ritual of the deity. The use of pillars in the Dravidian temple contrasts so well with their absence in the Orissan temples. The Dravidian temple, again, has enclosure walls (*prakaras*) surmounted by a gateway (originally cow-gate, *gopura*) which are absent in the Orissan temple. With scattered porches, minor shrines and pavilion, the Dravidian temple lacks the organisation of the different components, which is easily found in the Orissan temple.

THE TERMINOLOGY : When there is a mixture of two styles in a temple, any attempt to describe every component in the architectural schemes becomes difficult. We are forced to shift from one nomenclature to another. It may also be noted to his connection that even now a mixture of the Dravidian and Orissan terminologies is used by the local people in naming the different structures. Thus while the terms in vogue to describe the Dravidian temples, such as the *vimana*, *mukha-mandapa*, are freely used, words like *beda* (corruption of the Orissan word '*bada*') *mandapa* or '*bhogamandir*' which owe their inspiration to the Orissan style are also prevalent. With these provisos, we may now proceed to describe the Simhachalam temple.

THE VIMANA OUTSIDE AND INSIDE : The central shrine built in the 13th century is raised on a platform on a square ground plan of 42 feet to a height of 80 ft. The walls of the *vimana* are 10 ft. thick and thus the cella is a square of 22 ft. Like the Orissan temples, the outside walls are broken into five projections. The central shrine is of a *pancharatha* variety : the central projection slightly inclines forward and the adjoining projection (*anuratha*) and the corner projection (*kanikaraha*) are kept at the same level. The internal construction of the cella conforms to the pattern of any typical Orissan temple. At a level of 30 ft. a ceiling (*garbha-muda*) runs across the sanctum, and at a similar distance from the first ceiling another ceiling (*ratnamuda*) is laid. Access to his chamber between the first ceiling and the second is provided through a corbelled arch

of 6 ft. above the lintel.

A DRAVIDIAN SHRINE: If we forget for a moment the external projections and the internal construction, we find that the central shrine is typically Dravidian. It can be described as a *samachaturasra panchatala vimana* of the *Vesara* type. It is a *sama chaturasra vimana* because it is constructed on a square ground plan. The five *talas* of the tapering portion makes it a *panchatala vimana*. Because the apex is round in shape, we can describe it as belonging to the *Vesara* type (Figs. 4, 5).

BASE: The total height of the plinth of the central shrine is 7 ft. (Fig. 9). It is composed of several mouldings: an *upana*, a *jagati*, a *kshudra padma*, a *kumuda*, a *gala*, a *pattika*, a *vajana*, another *gala* and finally a *vedika*. The shape of the *upana*, the first member, deviates from the usual *upanas* and is chamfered into sections. In the language of masons (*sthapatis*), it can be termed as an *upana* with *varga bheda*. The *jagati* moulding, a rectangular one is decorated with a frieze of swans. The *kshudra padma*, resembling the petals of a lotus, the semi-circular *kumuda* and the vertical *gala* conform to the general pattern and so does the *pattika* (horizontal band) which is decorated with a creeper scroll punctuated with *kirtimukha* designs. A stringed course of elephant heads alternated by gryphon designs adorn the *vajana*; and, because they are carved on the section called *prati*, they are usually described as *pratimukham*. The topmost member, *vedika*, is ornamented with a creeper scroll.

THE WALL: After the plinth comes the vertical *bhitti*, measuring double the height of the plinth (Fig. 10). The treatment of the wall is rather ingenious. The pilasters on the extremities of each projection of the wall are studded with a handsome miniature shrine in the niches in between the projections. This is the general pattern. In the decoration of the pilasters one can notice architectonic sculpture at its best. Each pilaster is decorated with a lotus at the base, a *gaja-vyala* in the lower half of the shaft, and a rectangular panel for secular sculpture in the upper half of the shaft. The space between the pilasters is used for secular sculpture of utmost importance, namely, the royal figures (Fig. 10). The miniature replica of the shrine, which decorates the projection, is described

in Dravidian terminology as the recessed cage in the wall (*koshta panjara*) (Fig. 10). This pattern of rows of pilasters and replicas of shrine on the wall, is punctuated by the niches in the central projection of the three sides – the north, the east and the south. The niches contain the images of auxiliary deities, (*parsvadevatas*) the *Varaha*, the *Narasimha* and the *Trivikrama*.

**THE ENTABLATURE:** The entablature consists of a cornice, a string course of griffin heads, horizontal bands and finally a row of miniature shrines. This unit forms the first tier and this is repeated four times over the tower which is, about 40 ft. high. The *talas* of the *vimana* naturally diminish in size as they soar up.

**THE APEX:** In almost every Dravidian temple the final tier (*tala*) and the apex (*sikhara*) are separated by a neck (*griva*). But in the temple the neck portion measures only a foot, with the result that the *sikhara* appears to merge itself with the fifth tier (*tala*) of the spire. The apex or *sikhara* and *stupi* measure 12 ft. in height. The *sikhara*, a round stone, is covered with a gold-plated sheet (Fig. 5).

**THE FRONTAL PORCH:** The front porch, built on a square ground plan, rises to a height of 54 ft. Though it combines the features of both the Orissan and the Dravidian styles the pyramidal elevation is more akin to the Orissan style and resembles the elevation on the Jagamohana of the Sun Temple at Konarak.

**THE INSIDE WALLS:** The *mukhamandapa* is a 32 ft. square from inside (Fig. 3). The thickness of the walls is one half the size of the thickness of the walls of the *vimana*. Twelve pillars of 16 ft. height each disposed equally in the four corners support the flat ceiling above. The pillars have inverted lotus corbels which is most typical of the temple (Fig. 14). On the northern and southern sides, in the centre of the *mukhamandapa*, two structures, the *sayana mandir* and the *bhogamandir*, are raised. These are, however, modern additions. The outer walls, just like the *vimana*, are broken into five projections. This is also a *pancharatha deul* with only this difference, viz., the central projection is subdivided into smaller facets.

The height of the base and the wall of the frontal porch is the

same as that of the central shrine. The mouldings of the plinth are, once again, an *upana* a *jagati*, a *kshudra padma*, a *kumuda*, a *gala*, a *pattika*, a *vajana* with sprouting heads underneath, a *gala* and finally a *vedika*. The only difference between the plinth mouldings of the frontal porch and those of the central shrine is the absence of the frieze of swans on the first moulding. The *bhitti* is once again is decorated with the pattern of rows of pilasters on the projections and miniature shrines in the niches. There is a little change in the decoration of the pilaster. Instead of the *gaja vyalas* in the lower half of the shaft the pilasters of the frontal porch have the *mithuna* figures of different postures under the canopy of a miniature shrine (Figs. 11, 12). Again, if the walls of the central shrine have the niches containing the icons of the *parsvadevatas*, the southern and northern walls of the porch have perforated windows, called *jalis* in Orissan terminology, handsomely wrought on the central projections (Fig. 11).<sup>5</sup>

**THE TOWER :** The pyramidal elevation of the porch begins at a height of 21 ft. It is composed of a number of horizontal platforms (*pidhas*) which decrease in size as they reach the top to the crowning part. These platforms are piled up in three separate tiers: the first tier is composed of five platforms, the second one three, and the third again three (Fig. 5). The first tier is joined to the second one by a vertical section (*kanti*) of 3 ft. while the second one to the third by a vertical section of 2 ft. Small miniature *pidha deuls* adorn each projection on the top of each tier. These are however modern additions.

**THE CROWNING PART :** The crowning elements of the *mukhamandapa* differ from the typically Orissan temple. The usual components – the *beki*, the *ghanta*, the *amla*, the *khapuri* and the *kalasa* are absent. On a verticle section (*beki*) of 3 ft. rises a big *khapuri*, a component which resembles the sides of a bell. A big block of stone projects on the eastern side from this

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<sup>5</sup> Jali or the perforated window : 'An Orissan temple window is devised on the simple principle of a rectangular opening filled with a row of uprights at close intervals, but the manner in which the scheme is decoratively handled converts it into a notable work of art'. See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 105.

crowning member of the frontal porch, and placed underneath is the figure of a squatted woman, called in Orissan terminology the 'guardian deity'.

**ASSEMBLY-HALL:** The assembly-hall, a sixteen pillared one is built along with the structures already described, in the second half of the 13th century. The inside area measures a square of 42 ft. It is a porch, which is open on the east face, and has entrance gates on the three other faces. The western gate is the main entrance to the temple, the northern one leads to the marriage-hall, and the southern one to the Alvar shrine. The outer walls are divided by low offset projections.

**THE VERTICAL DIVISION:** Vertically the *asthanamandapa* is composed of a *upapitha* ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  ft.) *adhishtana* ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  ft.), *bhitti* (9 ft.), *prastara* (10 ft.), *sikhara* and *stupi* (each about 15 ft.) (Fig. 6). The *upapitha* is composed of horizontal mouldings—a *jagati*, a *kshudra padma*, a *kumuda*, a *gala* and a *vajana*. The *adhishtana* has an *upana*, a *jagati*, a *kshudra padma*, a *kumuda*, a *vajana*, a *gala* and *pattika*. The *bhitti* is characterised by pilasters and miniature shrines but is devoid of any architectural sculpture. The entablature is topped by miniature shrines with the designs of *kirtimukhas*.

The tower of the assembly-hall differs considerably from the usual pattern. According to the theme of construction followed in the Orissan temples, the porch in front of the Pidha deul is surmounted by a spire usually of a lesser height than the one on the Pidha Deul. But the builders of the Simhachalam temple were content to raise a dome of 15 ft. in the centre of the structure and fix a finial over it. Looked at from outside, it gives appearance of a stone hut with four sloping sides. The internal construction, accordingly, presents no roofing joining the opposite walls: the terraced roofing is limited to the sides and is supported by pillars having the inverted lotus corbels. Seen from inside, the hollow dome presents a strange appearance. It rises vertically to a height of 10 ft. from the level of the roofing and then begins to bracket inwards. One wonders at the ingenuity of the builders who were able to bring about a curvature in stone by fixing the trimmed stone blocks.

**THE CLOISTER:** The cloister which runs along the central shrine and the frontal porch at a distance of 15 ft. on the four



sides of the temple and ends up in itself in the assembly-hall on the west (Fig. 16). It has a basement of 8 ft. height and the width of the flooring measures 12 ft. Two rows of pillars, one built partly into the wall of the porch and the other on the right extremity, support the ceiling which is 12 ft. high, and which joins the ceiling of the assembly-hall in the west. The pillars built into the wall are regular rectangular blocks topped by inverted-lotus corbels. The only interesting feature about them is the icons carved on each on the upper half of the shaft. The pillars, which on the other hand, show considerable amount of ingenuity and variation. The cloister resembles closely its counterpart at Srikurmam and both of these are modelled after the cloisters found in the Dravidian temples.<sup>6</sup>

THE CHARIOT : The stone chariot which lies in the south-eastern corner of the cloister is in fact a porch which is made to look like a chariot by providing it with two wheels and a horse on either side of the base (Fig. 13). Parts of the chariot are renovated. Built on a plinth of 8 ft., the *ratha* has a rectangular platform (14 ft. by 11 ft.). Four pillars, each 8 ft. high, two of which have *vyala* bases, adorn the four corners. Originally it used to have terraced roofing; and the domical apex and finial that one now notices are recent renovations. The immediate inspiration to this chariot comes evidently from the chariot of *Sūrya* at Konarak. A parallel to this device of converting a *mandapa* into a *ratha* can be found at the Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram built by the Cholas in the last quarter of the 12th century.<sup>7</sup> The south flank of the *alankara mandapa* was made to look like a *ratha*. It is interesting to note that the pillars on this *ratha* have *vyala* bases in much the same way as in the Simhachalam temple. Can it be said that the general of Narasimhadeva under whose supervision the temple was built hit

<sup>6</sup> The cloister is a regular feature of the temple of the Tamilnad since the time of Pallava temples at Kanchipuram (8th century). In the Vengi country, the Chalukyan temples at Draksharama and in Samalkot built by Chalukya Bhima I (A. D. 892-921) have also these cloisters around the central shrine.

<sup>7</sup> The temple is described as that of Rajarajesvara, in the records of the place. This name is after the Chola king, Rajadhiraja (1163-78). Additions to the temple were made by Kulottunga III. See 'The Cholas' II Edition, p. 717, also plates IX, Figs. 11 and 12 for figures of the temple.

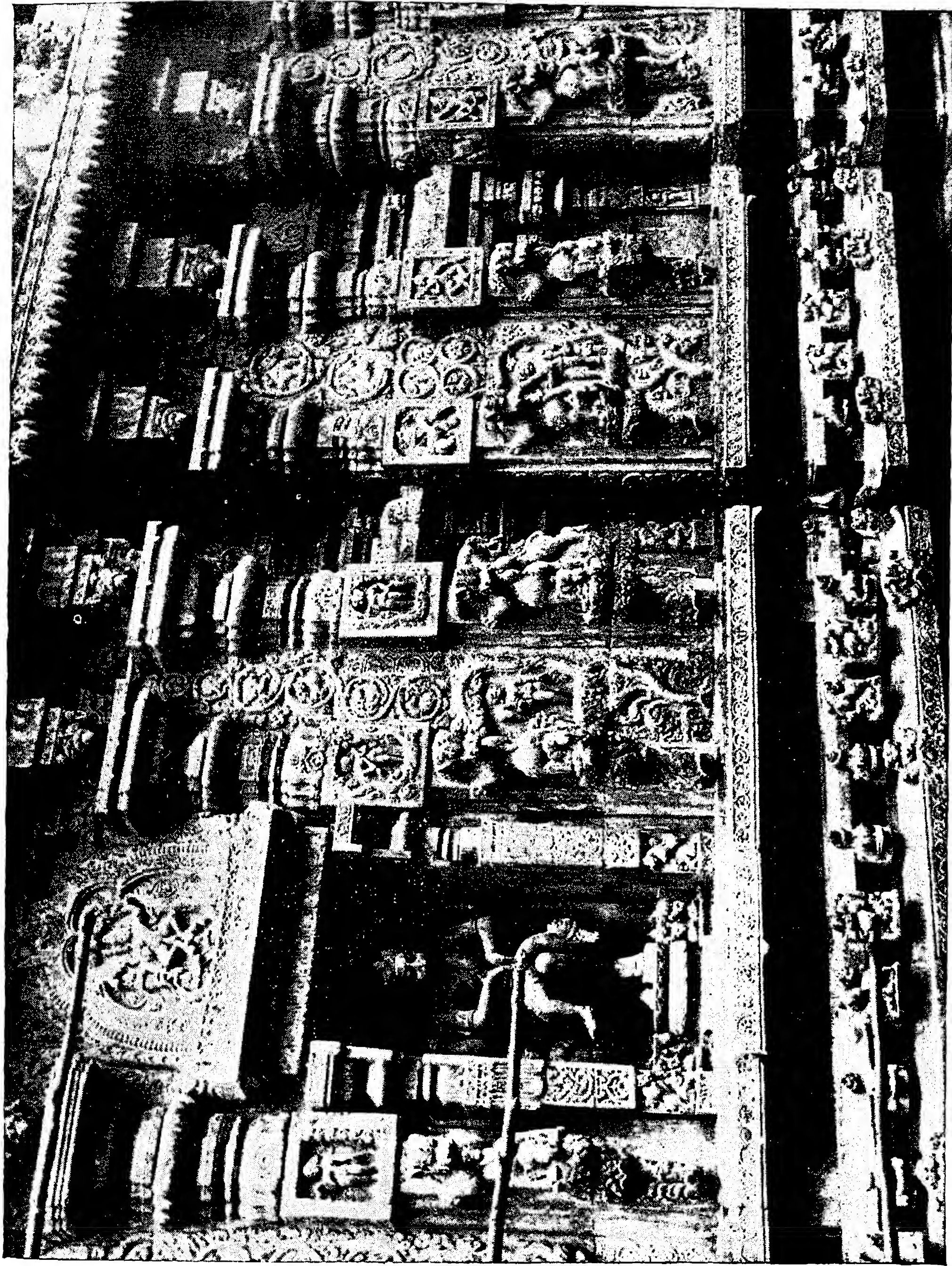


Fig. 25 : The Outer Wall of the Central Shrine

— Courtesy : Arch. Survey of India

upon this idea of *ratha mandapa* by being inspired by its Dravidian original?

**KALYANA MANDAPA:** This rectangular pillared hall was the last structure built by the commander of Narasimha and is referred to in the inscription as '*natya mandapa*' (Fig. 7). This pillared hall, which is now used for the celebration of the 'sacred wedding' of the Lord measures 104 ft. by 45 ft. built on a plinth of 4 ft. it has flat terraced-roofing. The hall is approached through a porch which presents pillars with the base of a *vyala*.

The interest of the *kalyana mandapa* lies in the 78 granite pillars arranged in six rows (Fig. 17). They are in a good state of preservation retaining their original polish. The general pattern is characterized by innovation and variety. The arrangement of each pillar is differs from the others. Three of the monoliths of the hall are decorated with figures of female door-keepers carved in high relief, while another bears a handsome *nagabandha*. The predominant type of the corbels is the inverted-lotus type. But some of the pillars show a transition from inverted-lotus to a slightly more developed variety. In this variety the corbel takes the shape of a lotus-bud which looks down, resembling the shape of a handsome curve (Fig. 18). In the pillars of the very first row the corbel takes the form of the head of a *makara*. All the pillars are ornately sculptured.

Unmistakable signs of Kakatiya influence can be seen in this porch. The inspiration for this pillared-hall appears to have come from the Kakatiya temples at Palampet and Hanumakonda. The first noticeable feature of the Deccanese style is the treatment of the plinth. Instead of the mouldings of *upana*, *α jagati* and the like, the plinth is cut into two horizontal compartments with rows of human figures sculptured in bas relief. These figures are of heterogeneous character comprising musicians, dancing girls, (*mithuna*) pairs and acrobats. Secondly, the polish of the pillars and the knife-edged sections of some of them shows their affinity to the Deccan temples.<sup>8</sup> If the marriage-hall of the Simhachalam

<sup>8</sup> The temples of Deccan show an amazing skill in polishing. Some are of the opinion that the stones polished were turned on a lathe. But the fact that the pillars of the rock-cut Kailasa temple hewn from a single rock



temple exhibits good craftsmanship, it is because of the fresh vigour imparted to it by the new cultural influence of the Deccan.

## SECTION II

**THE PILLARS:** The architectural features of the main structures have already been described. The rest of the structures are modern additions and do not need therefore any special study. The Tripurantakaswami *sannidhi*, the Sitaramaswamy *sannidhi*, the Andal *sannidhi* and the Lakshminarayanawamy *sannidhi* situated on the precincts of the temple are all modern versions of the Orissan Pidha Deul. In view of the importance of the pillars in the main structures—the frontal porch, the assembly-hall, the cloister and the marriage-hall—a description of the pillars is nevertheless necessary.

**THEIR GENERAL FEATURES:** The pillars in the Simhachalam temple bear resemblance to the temples of both the Deccan and Dravida countries. The round monoliths with horizontal bands, the square pillars with rectangular sections fully sculptured from top to bottom and the moulded pillars with knife-edged sections reveal their affinity to the pillars of the temples of the Deccan. The capitals of the pillars, on the other hand, consist of a *griva*, a *pushpa*, a *phalaka* and a *kapota* and resemble the pillars of the temples built by later Cholas. It must also be noted the decoration pattern on these pillars conforms to the usual Orissan designs.

**THE PILLARS IN THE MUKHAMANDAPA:** The pillars in the *mukhamandapa* and the porch in its front are 16ft. in length and 5½ ft. in circumference. The 12 pillars are broken into five low half-set projections just like the outer walls of the central shrine and the porch. The shaft is bare except for the creeper scroll design on the projections. The capital of the pillar consists of a *griva*, a *pushpa*, a *phalaka* and a *kapota*. The eight

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glisten bright, goes against this view. This appears to have been the result of a special dexterity obtained through long practice. See the '*Early History of Deccan*' edited by Yazdani Vol. II, p. 737. The pronounced knife-edged section of the Deccan temples has been described as "a striking and distinguishing detail of the order" by Percy Brown—See, *the Indian Architecture*, p. 145.

pillars in front of the porch differ from those inside the porch. They do not have any pedestals, and the shaft is divided into zones for the carving of different designs like the creeper scroll and the *kirtimukha* designs. The two pillars of either extremity of the porch are interesting. They are octagonal at the base, but sixteen-sided in the centre. The sixteen-sided surface once again becomes octagonal with eight rectangular sculptured bands encircling the shaft like a garland.

**PILLARS IN THE ASSEMBLY-HALL:** The pillars in the assembly-hall are  $15\frac{1}{2}$  ft. in height and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ft. in circumference. They are devoid of the usual pedestal. Out of the sixteen pillars, fifteen are round. The single exception is the pillar which is octagonal at the base and which is chamfered into double the number in the centre of the shaft. The shaft is uniformly divided into three sculptured zones consisting of half-a-foot width of creeper scroll, one foot of the frieze containing dancers and musicians, and three feet of *kirtimukha* designs, adorning the shaft cut deep into the finely grained charnockite. The single exceptional pillar has instead of the continuous frieze of dancers and musicians, eight sculptured panels which cover the sides of the pillar.

**THE PILLARS IN THE TIRUCHUTTUMALA:** The pillar types of the cloister are many and varied (Fig. 8). They are 12 feet high with a  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ft. circumference. The round pillars are uniformly adorned with a double-petalled lotus at the base. The upper half of the shaft is generally chamfered into three sculptured zones. The first frieze comprises a creeper scroll; the second, an animal frieze and the third, the *kirtimukha* designs. The capital is also uniform, consisting of a *griva*, a *kumbha*, a *pushpa*, a *phalaka* and a *kapota*.

**THE PILLARS IN THE FOUR SIDES:** Out of the fourteen pillars in the north, ten are round and the rest octagonal. Of the southern side, besides the usual round pillars, there are pillars whose sides are broken into three projections in some instances and five in others. They are decorated with the creeper scroll from base to the capital with the *kona singhas* (lions at the corners) in the centre of the shaft. Out of the ten pillars in the east, nine are square. They are adorned with creeper designs from base to the centre and are cut into octagonal from the centre to the top. Another special feature of the row is the square and



patterns—particularly the creeper with human figures hanging on to it and the pattern with series of plants mounted over the other on the doorjambs—are almost the same in both the temples. Also, the *navagrahas* on the lintels of the sanctum are represented in both the temples in the setting of two pilasters and an architrave over it. There is also a striking resemblance between the ornamentations of the images. For example, the ornamentation of the Surya Murtis in the niches of the central shrine of the *Konarak* temple and the different *parsva*, *parivara* and *avarana devatas* of Simhachalam temple stand close comparison. The conical crown, the jewelled necklace, the pearl-stringed sacred thread, the drapery, handsomely held up by means of a belt with a jewelled clasp in the centre and finally, the series of bells with pearl strings (*ghanta mala*) just below the belt, show the same craftsmanship. Of even greater significance are the two *parsva devatas* of Simhachalam and those of the Vishnu shrine recently discovered after sand clearance operations in the compound of the Sun Temple. These *parsva devatas* of Varaha and Trivikrama, both figuring in the niches of the outer walls, are almost alike except for minor details.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of this resemblance it may be inferred that the commander of Narasimha who built the temple employed some of the Orissan craftsmen to work along with the local sculptors.

Though the sculpture of the Simhachalam Temple breathes with the influence of medieval Orissan art, the influence from other regions is also apparent. The sculpture on the pillars—the panels of creepers and dancers and musicians—can be described as distinctively Chalukyan. On the other hand, the Vyala pillars at the entrance of the *Kalyanamaudapa*, the stringed-course of gryphon heads seen on the plinth mouldings and the decoration on some of the pillars of the marriage-hall with female chauri-bearers—all show the traditions of the craftsmanship of the Dravida country. Thus the temple presents varied sculptural patterns just as it displays different styles of architecture.

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Archaeology*, 1955-56, pl. XLVIII, infra, figs. 24 and 25.

## SECTION I

*Figures of Fauna and Flora*

The best specimens of sculpture are the depictions of natural scenery. The Orissan sculptor is famous for his true representation of foliage, birds and other animals. The geographical environment of Orissa with its wild forests supplies the inspiration for these motives, and the variegated creepers, the thick foliage of the forests and the different animals, furnish the various motifs of art.

**THE CREEPER:** In the depiction of motifs from vegetable life, the creeper receives particular attention. The simple creeper scroll (*sada dali*) is the most common horizontal ornamentation on the many pillars of the cloister (Fig. 8).<sup>2</sup> It adorns the horizontal mouldings of the plinth of the frontal porch and the central shrine (Fig. 9). The creeper scroll forms a horizontal or a vertical row on some pilasters of the walls of the frontal porch and the central shrine.

**CHAKRILATA:** The winding creeper issuing from a single stem with tendrils coiling around can be seen on the walls of the *mukhamandapa* decorating the Vishnu figures (Figs. 11, 12). *Sada chakri dali* with no stem but only coiling tendrils decorates the shafts of the perforated window and some of the pillars in the cloister.

**JIVALATA:** Another creeper with regularly curving and delicately clinging tendrils having insets of birds and animals decorates some of the Vishnu figures, the walls of the *mukhamandapa* and the secular figures, on the outer walls of the *vimana*. The different birds and animals depicted in these insets are the elephant, the lion, the horse, the deer, the sparrow, the goose and the fish (Figs. 11, 12).

**GALABAI OR MANUSHYA KAUTAKI:** This creeper with human figures clinging to alternate sides decorates the door-jambs of the sanctum and the frontal porch.

**VANALATA:** This creeper of the forest (*vana*) with thick foliage can be seen just above the Navagraha lintel of the

<sup>2</sup> The terminology current among the local craftsmen of Orissa supplies the appropriate names to these creepers: For an elaborate account of the floral motifs. See: A. Goswami, *Designs from Orissan Temple*, 8 ff.

sanctum. The *vanalata* with foliage interlocked serves as a canopy to the Sankha and Padma *nidhis* in the assembly-hall.

THE LOTUS: The lotus is considered by the Hindus as an auspicious symbol because of its association with the goddess Lakshmi, and is generally employed by craftsmen as a decorative motif in different ways. It is seen most conspicuously adorning the bases of round pillars (Fig. 8). It is usually depicted with two sets of petals, both pointing upwards.

BIRDS: Of all birds, the swan, the divine vehicle of Brahma, is accorded a prominent place in the decorative scheme of the temple.<sup>3</sup> A stringed-course of swans adorn the basement of the outer walls of the temple, the plinth of the central shrine and the stone chariot in the north-eastern corner of the temple (Figs. 9, 13).

OTHER BIRDS: Birds like the sparrow and the goose are represented in the centre of medallions formed by the winding creepers which are carved on the walls of the *vimana* and the *mukhamandapa*.

THE ELEPHANT: The elephant is the most common motif used in the temple.<sup>4</sup> A stringed-course of elephants adorn the basement at the very entrance of the temple just below the flag-staff. These elephants bristle with life. Two pairs of elephants in a row with their faces turning to the east are depicted so as to give the impression that they are moving towards the temple. A panel of elephants in a row forms the base of the *kala-makara torana* over the perforated window on the southern and northern walls of the *mukhamandapa* (Fig. 11). The elephant is represented true to life on the circular horizontal bands on the pillars of the cloister (Fig. 8). Elephants chasing one another or fighting lions, and elephants with their tamers, and with warriors on their back, figure in the circular bands. An elephant stands on the petals of a flower on the south wall of the central shrine. On the east wall of the frontal porch below the seated royal figure, an elephant is

<sup>3</sup> This is based on the dictum of the *agama* texts that the sports of the swans should be carved on the walls of the temple—*Samarangana Sutra-dhara*, LVII, 360.

<sup>4</sup> The elephants, according to the ancient Hindu tradition, are supposed to guard the four quarters. One often hears the expression '*Diggaja*' (the elephant of the quarter). The practice of using the elephant as a decorative motif of the plinth of the temple has had its origin in this conception.

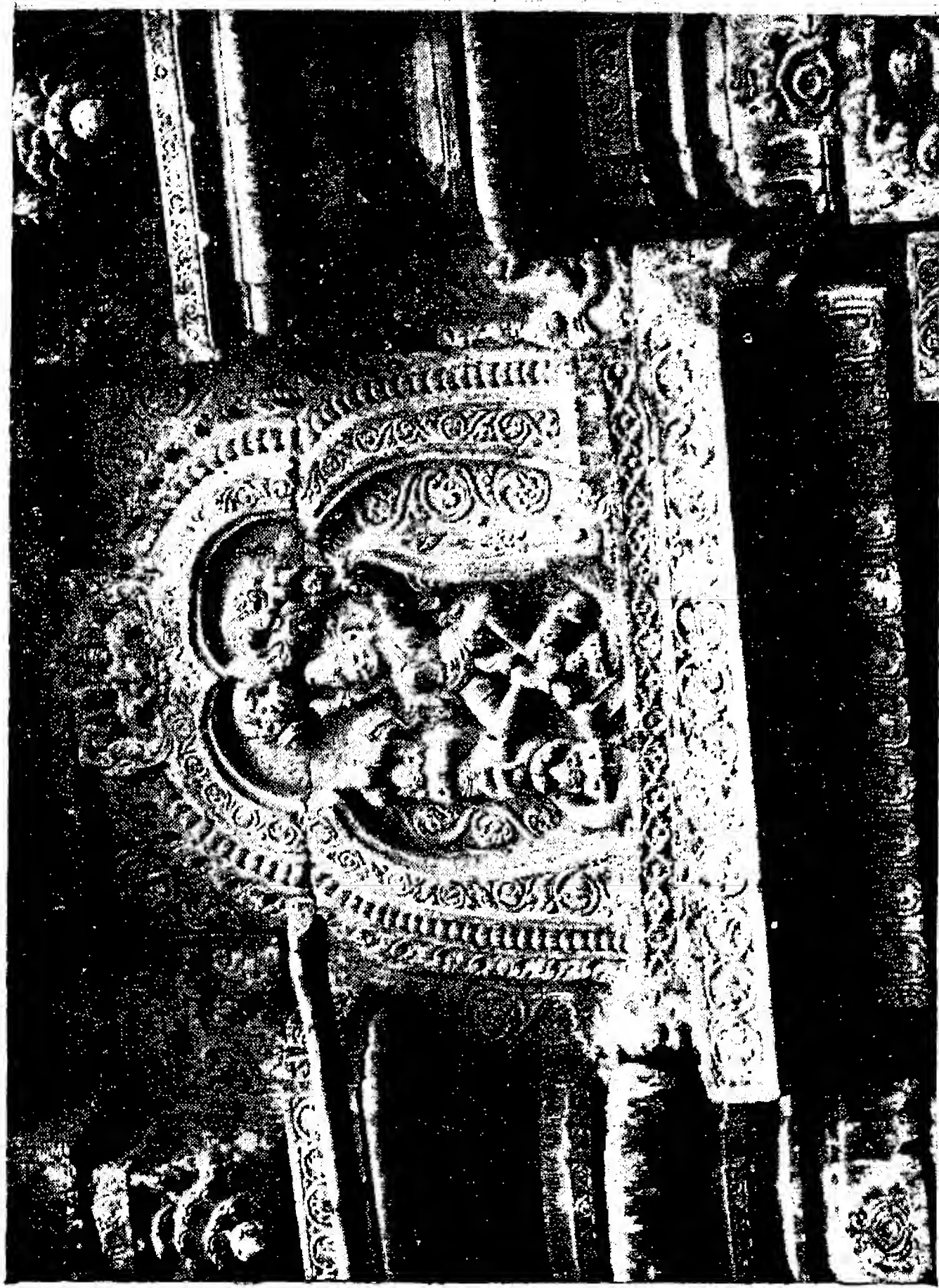


Fig. 26 : 'Kaliya Mardana'

—Courtesy: Arch. Survey of India

carved standing stately face to face to a horse.

**THE LION :** The lion along with other animals figures in the circular bands on the pillars of the cloister. In some of the rows of the animals, the lion is depicted as fighting with an elephant. In some of the pillars of the cloister, right in the centre of the shaft and at each of the four corners, lions figure in the couchant form (*kona singhas*).

**THE HORSE :** The horse figures along with other in the horizontal circular bands on the pillars of the cloister. War horses with riders are sculptured on some of these bands. A horse facing an elephant stands on a flower below the seated figure of the royal person. With its reins and the saddle it looks as if it is ready to ride on. Another horse with a rider is represented in a galloping pose on the east wall of the central shrine on the extreme right corner against the back ground of a flower and a creeper.

**THE DEER :** The deer in all poses figures in the circular bands on the round pillars in the cloister. Of particular interest is the depiction of the deer on the pillar in front of the frontal porch in a circular band against a back ground of musicians and dancers. The deer in its characteristic jumping posture, with its head bent and touching its rear part can be seen in this row.

**The Monkey :** The representation of the monkey occurs but once on the decorated rectangular panel in the centre of the pilaster on the northeastern corner of the wall of the central shrine. In a setting of branches and leaves, it sits with its hands resting on its legs looking curiously at the visitors.

**OTHER ANIMALS :** In the circular panels of the animals carved on the pillars in the northern and southern sides of the cloister, we occasionally find the sculptures of the boar and the leopard along with those of the elephant and the lion. Cows, the inviolable companions of Lord Krishna, figure on the panels of Venunadha, sculptured on the eastern wall of the central shrine and the front porch.

## SECTION II

### *Human Figures*

Figures of men and women carved in relief find their place in



the scheme of decoration of pilasters, pillars and walls. This practice is in conformity with the decoration pattern of the Orissan temples. Particularly at Konarak the use of the figures of men and women in the decorative scheme is prominent.

**KANYAS :** Most of the figures of females sculptured in the temple are typical amorous female figures that are to be found in most of the Orissan temples.<sup>5</sup> In a number of poses they figure on the rectangular panels of the pilasters of the outer walls of the central shrine and the frontal porch, and on the row of pillars on the eastern side of the cloister. A few of them also adorn the wall of the central shrine. Some of the female figures hold the branch of a tree, others stand in a dancing pose and still others stand in an alluring pose with one leg raised and gracefully bent.

**CHETI :** *Chetis* are female attendants in the homes of nobles and kings. They are generally depicted in sculpture with their chauris. The *chetis*, one holding the chauris on the shoulder and the other resting it on the ground, figure in the rectangular panels on the pilasters of the eastern wall of the central shrine. Also a lone *cheti* with the setting of a flower and creeper is sculptured on the eastern wall of the central shrine.

**CHETIS IN THE MARRIAGE-HALL :** By far the most important figures are the exquisite life-sized figures of *chetis* found in the marriage-hall (Fig. 20). Three *chetis* adorn, one on each, three pillars near the entrance of the hall. Of these one sculpture is completely mutilated and our description must confine itself to the two *chetis* sculptured on the two pillars in such a way as to face each other. One of the *chetis*, who is depicted with left leg crossing the right one, appears to be the older of the two and has the non-chalant air of one who had long been in service. The other, holding the chauri erect and standing on her tiptoes with a humourous tinge in her face, is the younger of the two. She appears to be quite keen about her duties, ready to answer any call. Both the figures are carved with an eye on the canons for depicting feminine beauty, with full breasts, slender waist and shapely thighs. Both hold chauris

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<sup>5</sup> According to Orissan *silpa sastras*, the female figures should be placed on the base of the temple. See N.K. Bose, *Canons of Orissan Architecture*, p. 107.

in their right hand, the older a larger one and the younger a smaller one. Both are elaborately ornamented with ear-rings, necklace, armlets and anklets. The drapery is equally elaborate and is held up with a belt. The hair is tied up in a knot on the left side of the head and is decked with flowers. In the arrangement of coiffeur, ornamentation and drapery, the artist shows himself to be a master in the delineation of details. Looked at for the first time, one feels they are metal images. They are easily the best form of sculpture that the medieval artist could present.

The figures of the *chetis* of the Simhachalam temple bear resemblance to those that stand on the two sides of the entrance door of the Saraba Sannidhi in the Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram. We have already seen that there are points of resemblance between the architectural scheme of the Darasuram temple and that at Simhachalam.<sup>6</sup> Hence it is probable that the inspiration for the figures of the *chetis* comes from the Dravidian example.

**DANCERS AND MUSICIANS:** The panel of figures of dancers and musicians is the main theme of decoration for the round pillars of the assembly-hall and the marriage-hall. Most of these circular panels in the assembly-hall are mutilated. On a pillar just in front of the eight rectangular plates encircle the pillar at the centre of the shaft with the figures of three female dancers, four female drummers and a male dancer sculptured in bas-relief. On two similar rectangular panels of the pilasters of the north wall of the central shrine figure a female dancer and a male drummer. These bear close resemblance to the dancer and drummer sculptured on two pilasters of the walls of the dancing-hall of the Konarak temple.<sup>7</sup>

**MALE FIGURES:** Male figures are sculptured in bas-relief on the rectangular panels at the centre of pilasters of the walls of the frontal porch. These are mostly men on march to the battle. The bas-reliefs of two men with swords in one of their hands and shields in the other have their exact counterparts at the Konarak temple.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See *supra*, chapter IX.

<sup>7</sup> For plates of the Konarak figures. See O. C. Ganguly, '*Konarak*', plate 20.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, plate 67. *infra* (Fig. 12).

**ROYAL FIGURES:** In the space between the pilasters on the outer walls of the central shrine are carved ten royal figures. They depict a royal person in different attitudes. He is seen seated on a throne attended by servants, riding on a horse, mounted on an elephant, seated in *padmasana*, and in a meditating attitude, and threatening the ill-behaved with a sword.

This royal person can be identified as Narasimhadeva of the Ganga dynasty to whose inspiration the temple owes its origin. For these figures bear resemblance to the royal figures of the Sun temple at Konarak. The Konarak figures now preserved in the museum near the temple and whose original position is traced to the base of the main temple depict the king in different attitudes—worshipping, moving on a swing, and sitting on the side of Durga, Jagannadha and a *linga*. The sculptures of the temples of Mukhalingesvara at Mukhalingam, Lingaraja at Bhuvanesvar, and Jagannadha at Puri show that there was an attempt to depict the respective royal personages connected with the temple on the outer walls of the main shrine.

**MITHUNAS:** Amorous couples are sculptured on the base of each pilaster of the frontal porch canopied by a miniature shrine. Thus the bases of the pilasters form a horizontal row of couples around the walls of the entire frontal porch. Unfortunately most of them are mutilated. They include the figures of couples caressing, embracing tightly or in actual coitus (Fig. 12).

The *mithuna* motifs in the temple bear some resemblance to the famous *mithunas* depicted on the Jagmohan of Konarak. Though they are only 'museum pieces' when compared to the life-sized *mithunas* of the Konarak temple, they show good taste and poise in workmanship.

The presence of these *mithunas*, some of them showing coitus postures of gross perversion, has often been the subject of controversy.<sup>9</sup> The most plausible explanation appears to be the one given by Prof. K. K. Pillay in his article on "The Mithuna motif in Indian Art".<sup>10</sup> In his opinion, this motif has due to various influences, undergone steady and progressive

<sup>9</sup> See Proceedings of Indian History Congress, 1945, Annamalainagar Session, p. 94. 1946 Patna Session, p. 17. *The Hindu Temple*, p. 146.

<sup>10</sup> *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, 1956-57, 21 ff.

increase since the beginning of Indian Art. It began in the sacerdotal place given to sex in all primitive religions. The Mahabharata recognizes the worship of male and female sex organs. To this basic factor were added the influence of Greco-Roman tradition of art the erotic literature of Vatsyayana and Kalidasa, the sanction of the Puranas like Agni Purana, and finally the erotic tendencies of Tantric Buddhism which crept into the Hindu systems of worship by about 9th century. 'Under the cumulative influence of these circumstances', Prof. Pillay writes, 'the epoch of 9th and 10th centuries A. D. in India which witnessed a gross degeneration in all spheres of life, afforded temptation for the artists, to give vent to their imagination and the consequence was that there appeared abscene products of art in Orissan temples'.

### SECTION III

#### *Conventional and Symbolic Sculpture*

**VYALA OR GRIFFIN:** *Vyala* is the figure of lion with features of a demon. It adorns the bases of the pillars in the marriage-hall. It is sculptured in a couchant posture with the body of a lion with protruding eyes, wide mouth projecting teeth and a big mane. A variant of this form is the *vyala* with an elephant head, and this also is to be found in the marriage-hall adorning the bases of the pillars of the outermost row.

The *vyalas* are products of the Dravidian genius. The beginnings of this architectural motif of decorating the bases of the pillars with *vyalas* must be found in the monolith and structural temple complex at Mahabalipuram built under the aegis of the Pallavas of Kanchi.<sup>11</sup> In the temples of the Cholas this device is omitted in the early phase, but is once again taken up in the later phase. The Darasuram temple built in the last quarter of the 12th century once again presents this feature. In the whole range of Kalinga temples, only in the Sri Kurmesvara temple and the Simhachalam temple one finds these pillars with *vyala* bases.

**GAJA-VYALA:** The motif of the *gaja-vyala* is the most profusedly used in the temple. Here, a rampant lion is to be seen over the body of a couchant elephant. This motif appears

<sup>11</sup> See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 81.

on the bases of each pilaster of the outer walls of the central shrine on the pillar in the porch over the stone *ratha* and in the mouldings of the base of the central shrine and the frontal porch (Fig. 10). In the most usual form found on the pilasters the lion holds the elephant between the hind legs, and looks back on the plight of the elephant with its own head and paws raised. In the base mouldings, the lion stands over the body of the elephant in an angle of  $45^{\circ}$ . On a pillar described as Kappastambhamu in the porch before the mukhamandapa, the lion stands on the hinder part and tramples down the elephant plunging its great claws into the head of the elephant (Fig. 14).

This motif of the rampant lion over the couchant elephant is highly popular in the medieval Orissan art and is to be found in almost all the temples starting from Parasuramesvara at Bhubanesvar.

The origin of this motif has been a topic of discussion among scholars. O. C. Ganguly traces it to the cult of Durga. He quotes a passage from *Devipurānam*, a work of great antiquity which commends the making of a like image.<sup>12</sup> The lion, the great vehicle of Durga, according to the *purāna*, is to be represented as subduing the elephant and then tearing into it to extricate the pearl which is supposed to lie hidden in the head of the elephant. This explanation appears to be correct. The Sakti worship has been present in Orissa since the early days of temple building.<sup>13</sup>

**THE FOLIATED ARCH:** The motif of foliated arch appears in two different forms. Over the niches of the *parśvadevatas* on the walls of frontal porch, it takes the form of a *kalamakara* arch (Fig. 12). In this form the arch contains the head of *kirtimukha* in the centre and *makara* heads on both ends. Over the top of the arch a jar with two miniature lions on either side are to be seen. The inside space of the arch is used for sculptures in bas-relief.<sup>14</sup> The second form of this motif,

<sup>12</sup> O.C. Ganguly, *Konarak*, Annotation to plates; p. 1. For the date of the *purāna*, see Hazra, *Studies in Upapurānas*, Vol. II, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> See K. C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological remains at Bhubanesvar*, p. 233.

<sup>14</sup> The origins of the arch seen on the Hindu temples starting from the Gupta times can be traced back to the facade of the Buddhist *chaitya* and still further back to the Vedic hut. (For the diagrams showing the



known as *Bho* in Orissan parlance, is the *kirtimukha* with pearl strings issuing from its mouth which form themselves into concentric circles. Inside the inmost circle the emblem of a flower or a human face or a bell is placed. This second form is most extensively used in the temples. It adorns the door jambs of central shrine and the frontal porch, the recessed miniature pavilion on the walls of the central shrine and the frontal porch, on the vertical beams of the perforated windows, on the horizontal mouldings of the base and on the pillars of the cloister (Figs. 9 & 11).

Both these forms of foliated arches obtain in the Orissan temples. The *kalamakara torana* of the temple is an adoption of the famous arches in front of the Muktesvara temple at Bhuvanesvar for decorative purpose.<sup>15</sup> The second type of arch, the one with *kirtimukha* terminating in circles, called *Bho*, makes its appearance first in the Muktesvara temple of the Bhuvanesvara group and becomes stylized in later temples.<sup>16</sup> The stylised motif in the Simhachalam temple bears close resemblance to the motif of arch at Konarak.<sup>17</sup>

GEOMETRIC DESIGNS: On many pillars in the cloister and elsewhere in the temple, *kirtimukha* patterns are sculptured on the upper half of the shaft in a circular row with long pearl strings emanating from them. These pearl strings, called in native terminology as the garland issuing from *Rahu* (*mukher mala*) are joined together to make uniform parabolas (Fig 15). This motif is also to be found on the lintel over the niches on three sides of the central shrine and on the recessed miniature shrines on the walls. Another motif coming under this category is the motif of two concentric circles of pearls with a bell at the centre of the inner circle, all dangling together from a

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development of the motif from 250 B. C. to 9th century, see Percy Brown *Indian Architecture*, plate XXV).

<sup>15</sup> For the photograph, see R.D. Banerje, '*History of Orissa*' Vol. II, p. 21. It may be noted that this *Kalamakara torana* was transmitted to Southeast Asia by the Hindu colonists from Kalinga and forms a significant decoration of gateway in the temples of Cambodia, Java and Champa (for figures, see, Percy Brown, loc cit, plates C1 IX to C1 XIII).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> O. C. Ganguly, Konarak, plate 24.

lotus. This is to be found as a decorative motif for all icons carved on the pillars in the back row of the cloister. These designs have their counter-parts at Konarak.<sup>18</sup>

MINIATURE PAVILION MOTIF: This motif of miniature pavilion, known in Orissan terminology as *Pidha Mundi*, forms a canopy for each icon carved on the pillars of the cloister.<sup>19</sup> The crowning part of the *Mundi* is flanked by the demigods. The most handsome of these *pidha mundis* is the one drawn on the *Sankha* and *Padmamidhis* on the left and right corners of the assembly hall. Another form of miniature shrine is the *Khakhara Mundi*, seen on the bases of the pilasters of the outer walls of the frontal porch, serving as a canopy to the sculptures of amorous couples (Fig.12).

Both these miniature shrine motifs are used in the Orissan temples. For example, these motifs serve as a background sculptures of icons carved on the walls of the Lingaraja Temple.<sup>20</sup>

## SECTION IV

### *Ganas, Vidyadharas and Nagas*

GANAS:<sup>21</sup> DEMIGODS: The figures of the demigods are sculptured on the rectangular panels at the centre of pilaster of the outerwalls of the central shrine, one on the northern side and the other on the eastern side. The two figures are alike. With a pot-like belly, protruding eyes, moustache and a beard, these give a grotesque and comical appearance. They bear a close resemblance to the demigods carved on the plinth of the Jagamohana of the Konarak.<sup>22</sup>

VIDYADHARAS:<sup>23</sup> Flying demigods in miniature are seen

<sup>18</sup> See A. Goswamy, *The Designs from Orissan Temples*, plate 46.

<sup>19</sup> The earliest attempts to use the miniature shrine as a decorative motif can be traced to the early Chalukyan temples at Pattadakal. See, Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 69.

<sup>20</sup> See Debala Mitra, *Bhavanesar*, p. 50.

<sup>21</sup> The Ganas of the Orissan temples recall the Yakshas of the early Buddhist sculpture. Being associated with Kubera, these are generally taken to be friendly to human beings.

<sup>22</sup> For the Konarak, figures, see O. C. Ganguly's *Konarak*, p. 19..

<sup>23</sup> Vidyadharas are heavenly magicians. Both these—the Ganas and the Vidyadharas—figure in all the temples of Orissa.



Fig. 27: Bhu-Varaha

on every icon sculptured on the pillars of the cloister, flanking the *pidha mundi*. They stand either on the *pidha mundi* or on a lotus, and have the usual ornaments, a crown (*makuta*), ear-rings (*kundalas*), necklaces (*haras*), armlets (*valayas*) and anklets (*padasaras*). They touch the ornamental jar, of the Mundi with one hand. A typical demigod of the Orissan temple is sculptured on some of the rectangular panels at the centre of the pilaster on the south and north walls of the frontal porch and the central shrine. With their hands raised, they balance their legs in a flying pose. The ends of the scarfs of their dress flutter on their sides.

**NAGA AND NAGINI:** The first thing that attracts and puzzles the eye in the marriage-hall of the temple at its very entrance, is the *naganagini bandha* on one of its pillars, (Fig. 19). On the eight sides of the pillar two pairs of *naga* and *nagini* are sculptured with utmost realism. The *nagas* and *naginis* are half-human and half-serpent—the upper portion being human and the lower a serpent coil. These coils intertwined each other. The whole pillar is thus covered with the coils of intertwining serpents. The *nagas* and *naginis* have serpent hoods. Between these *nagas* and *naginis* are carved male and female figures attending on them. The motif of the serpent hood is presented in the lower base of the pillar.

A naga pillar is a product of medieval Orissan art.<sup>24</sup> It is absent in the early temples of Orissa. It first makes its appearance in the twin temples at Gandharadi and it continues to appear in other temples starting from the Muktesvara temple in the Bhuvaneswar group.<sup>25</sup> The twin *nagas* (*nagayugma*) and a combination of three *nagas* (*nagatrayi*) on the pillar are development over the original motif and appear for the first time in the Jagannatha temple at Puri. At Konarak we have a plethora, of *naganagini mithunas* on the pilasters of the lower base of Jagamohana. But the *naga-bandha* pillar in the Simhachalam temple stands out in all the examples of the Orissan style of

<sup>24</sup> The origin of the use of *nagas* in decoration has to be traced to the serpent worship prevalent among the Hindus. The *naga bandha* of the Orissan temple is consistent with the mithuna motif.

<sup>25</sup> Gandharadi in Baudh State on the right bank of Mahanadi presents 'the earliest type of medieval temples of Orissa' See, R. D. Banerji's *History of Orissa*, Vol. II, pp. 339 and 347.

sculpture and has a unique charm. Nowhere is it so bold in conception and finished in detail as it is in the Simhachalam temple.

## SECTION V

### Icons

The Simhachalam temple, like other temples of the medieval Kalinga, presents sculptures of *parsva*, *parivara* and *avarana devatas*. Parsva devatas of the temple are the life-sized sculptures of Varaha, Narasimha and Trivikrama carved in the niches ( $5\frac{1}{2}' \times 2\frac{1}{2}'$ ) on the north, east and south walls of the central shrine respectively. Among them only the sculpture of Varahamurti maintains its pristine quality, the other two being renovated in parts. The *parivara devatas* like the *astadikpalas*, and the minor forms of the main deity usually found on the walls of the central shrine in Orissan temples are not to be found in the temple.<sup>26</sup> Instead we have only a few bas-relief sculptures of icons on the walls of the central shrine and the front porch. The *avarana devatas* of the Simhachalam temple are those that are seen on the pillars of the cloister and the marriage-hall. Numerous icons of recent origin are to be found on the way to the temple (in the niches of the walls on both the sides of the steps) and also on the premises of the Gangadhara. But these may be simply ignored in a survey of the sculpture of the temple proper. It may also be mentioned that most of the icons carved on the temple confirm to the descriptions given in the iconographic texts.

**YAJNA VARAHA:** The life-size sculpture of *Varaha* in the niche of the north wall of the central shrine is perhaps the best preserved of all the icons carved in the temple (Fig. 23). The setting itself in a frame of two pilasters and an architrave with decorative sculpture all around gives the sculpture a grand framework. The figure of Varaha stands with one foot on the *padmapitha* and the other raised foot on the head of Adi Sesha. With the upper two hands, he holds, a conch and a discus and rests the lower

<sup>26</sup> The tower of the vimana, now renovated, is reported to have contained some sculptures of icons in the lower row. But these are now lost; in their place we now have the lifeless cement sculptures of Varaha, Narasimha, Anantasayana and others.



left hand to the chest to suggest a challenging mood. The raised left foot, the threatening posture of the hand, the sinewy arms and broad chest suggest the strength and determination of the Great Deity to carry his divine mission. Bhudevi stands on the side of the raised left leg, and by the side of the right leg stands a devotee with folded hands. On the sides of *padmapitha* are the kneeling female figures with hands in an *anjali* pose. Just above the Bhudevi is the decorative motif of Gaja-Vyala. The deity has the background of *Kalamakara torana*, flanked by demigods. The resemblance of the decorative details of this deity with the Vishnu Murti at Konarak has already been mentioned. The former wears a crown, ear-rings, a jewelled necklace and a pearled *yajnopavita*. The drapery is tied up with a belt. Just below the belt dangle the rows of bells with pearl strings (*ghanta mala*). The pilasters on the sides have the decorative design of *gajavyala* at the base, followed up by foliage designs. At the centre of the pilasters are bas-relief sculptures of Garuda on the left and Hanuman on the right. The architrave is decorated with rows of *kirtimukhas* from whose gorgeous mouth issue forth pearls.<sup>27</sup>

STAUNA NARASIMHA: The image of Narasimha rending the entrails of Hiranyakasipu can be seen in the niche of the wall of the central shrine on the east side. This image is recently renovated with cement, and the result is that the beauty of the original is completely lost. The setting of the niche and the pattern of decoration is the same as for the image of Varaha. Here Narasimha stands erect with his left foot raised, his ankle resting on the right knee on which he holds the body of Hiranyakasipu and is seen in the action of tearing the entrails of the lord of Demons. He holds a conch and a discus in the other two of his hands. On both the sides of the deity stand his consorts, Bhudevi and Sridevi, holding lotuses in their hands. The ornamentation and other details are exactly the same as per the Varaha Murti.

It may be noted here that this Narasimha figure was for sometime an object of regular worship. Formerly the deity used to be covered with a screen which was lifted when the devotees

<sup>27</sup> An inscription of the temple mentions this deity by name as Yajna Varaha. This image appears to have been an object of worship in the medieval times. See S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 761.

visited the spot. The pilgrims were told the story of the master craftman who built the temple facing the east and of his son who turned it to the west, and were also told that the Narasimha in the niche was originally the main deity.<sup>28</sup> Subsequently this practice was abandoned.

TRIVIKRAMA: This icon in the niche of the south wall of the central shrine is renovated in parts. Its left leg and face have undergone plastering. The icon Trivikrama stands with one foot raised aloft, holding a club and a discus in his upper hands and a lotus and a conch in his lower hands. The only difference between the ornamentations of this icon and that of the Varaha is the elaborate ear-rings and the conical cap which adorn this deity. Just below his left leg lies the narrative sculpture which depicts in the miniature form the story of the granting of land by the king of the Nether Region, Bali, to Vamana. Vamana who is no other than Lord Vishnu in the guise of a brahmin holding his *chatra* goes to the court of king Bali. Asked by the king to make a wish, Vamana begs for just three feet of land knowing full well that he could exhaust the entire universe in less than three feet. King Bali is seen in the sculpture seated on his throne. In the next sculpture the king is seen standing, making his donation with both his hands which the Brahmin gladly receives. On the sides of the deity, stand Sridevi and Bhudevi, holding lotuses. Down below are the kneeling figures of Garuda on the one side, and of two devotees, a man and a woman, their hands in *anjali* pose on the other. The deity has the usual background of the arch flanked by the figures of flying gods.

The interest of the panel of Trivikrama lies in the sculptures of the miniature pavilions in the background of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi. These pavilions, described as *Khakara Mundis*, are drawn in much the same way as their counterparts in the panels of the Surya at Konarak.<sup>29</sup> The close affinity between the sculptures of Simhachalam and those of Konarak can be understood by this comparison.

GOVARDHANADHARI: The bas-relief sculpture of Lord Krishna, which lies just above the Varahamurti on the north wall of the

<sup>28</sup> See *supra* Chapter V.

<sup>29</sup> See O. C. Ganguly, *Konarak*, Plate 24.

central shrine, is sculptured in the *kala makara torana*. The handsome and youthful, Krishna stands in his characteristic *tribhangi* posture balancing the mountain on the tip of his little finger of the left hand. The right hand rests on the club. The ornamentation is rather scanty. Krishna wears a peculiar cap reminiscent of the one worn by the Surya Murti at Konarak. Round ear-rings and armlets adorn the deity, and the loin cloth is tied by a belt. On both his sides are Gopikas and cows.

**KALIYAMARDANA:** On the east wall of the central shrine just above the panel of Narasimha, appears the bas-relief of the youthful Krishna dancing on the hoods of serpent Kaliya (Fig. 26). The deity is profusely ornamented. The drapery is held together by a *katibandha* with a jewelled clasp. On the right side of the Lord are two *nagas*, and another on the left, all three with their hands in the *anjali* pose.

**VENUGOPALA :** Besides the bas-reliefs of Govardhana and Kaliyamardana another theme of Krishna is sculptured on the south wall of the central shrine over the niche containing the image of Trivikrama. This is another figure of Krishna playing on the flute. The Gopikas and the cows are depicted as gazing at him, entraptured by his music. Venugopala in this figure is scantily ornamented, but he wears the *Vanamala* round his neck. This *Vanamala* is not found with the figures of Krishna described above.

**VISHNU :** Another bas-relief is the sculpture of standing Vishnu on the left corner of the west wall of the central shrine. The usual ornaments, adorn this deity. With the upper hands, he holds a conch and a discus; of the two lower hands, one rests on a club and the other is held in the *varada* pose.

**NAVA GRAHAS:** The Nava grahas, sculptured on the lintel of the entrance of the sanctum bear close resemblance to the famous Nava grahas on the lintel of the temple at Konarak. This lintel is now preserved in a museum. Each planet is placed in the setting of pilasters and the arch of miniature shrine (*pidha mundi*) in the same way as the *grahas* were arranged at Konarak. From left to right the seated *grahas* on the lintel are: Sun (Ravi), Moon (Chandra), Mars (Kuja), Mercury (Budha), Jupiter (Brihaspati), Venus (Sukra), Saturn (Sani), and the ascending and the descending nodes of the Moon (Rahu and

Ketu). Of these only four—Ravi holding the lotus, Brihaspati with his beard, Rahu with his demonic face and Ketu with his sword—can be recognized. Each of these images are adorned with a conical cap and a *yajnopavita* and are seated in *padmasana* on a *padmapitha*. Above the *grahas*, a *vanalata* with a thick foliage and above that *kirtimukhas* with pearl strings are sculptured.

This *navagraha* lintel is common to all the temples of medieval Orissa. In the earlier temples like those of Parasuramesvara and Markandeyesvara at Bhuvanesvar, only eight planets are to be seen on the lintel. Ketu is omitted. In the Muktesvara temple, which marks a distinct stage of progress, Ketu makes his appearance. The Navagrahas are always represented in all these temples on the lintel of the entrance of the sanctum and are invariably represented in the same series, starting from Ravi and ending with Ketu, with Brihaspati in the centre.

The representation of *Navagrahas*, symbols of auspiciousness, whose presence is invoked in all religious functions in the temples, appears to be a practice coming from the Gupta times.<sup>30</sup>

### *Icons on the outer walls of Mukhamandapa*

VISHNU ICONS: Nineteen standing icons of Vishnu are sculptured in bas-relief on the walls of the frontal porch (Figs. 12 & 13). Each of these figures stands on a *padmapitha* with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi on the sides. Over its head is sculptured a creeper scroll. The ornamentation of these icons confirms to the pattern of ornamentation of Vishnu Murtis described earlier. Each of these figures has to be distinguished from the other by the disposition of the emblems *sankha*, *chakra*, *gada* and *padma*. Texts on iconography like the Rupamandana and the Padma Purana mention 24 forms of Vishnu, each distinguished by the disposition of the weapons.<sup>31</sup> Of the nineteen

<sup>30</sup> See A. Coomaraswamy's article on 'Some South Indian Sculptures in American Museum'—Rupam No. 18, 1924.

<sup>31</sup> Several texts like the Agnipurana, the Padma Purana and Hemadris *Chaturvarga Chinthamani* deal with the question of identification of the twenty four forms of Vishnu. Of these Rupamandana's classification is the most exhaustive. Rupamandana not only mentions the 24 forms of Vishnu

images on the walls some are badly damaged and beyond identification. Only nine can be identified with certainty. Narayana and Hari on the west face, Vishnu and Madhusudhana on the north face, Sankarshana on the east face, and Trivikrama, Vasudeva, Narasimha and Pradyumna on the south face can be recognized thus by the disposition of their *ayudhas*.

VENUGOPALA: Venugopala sculptured on the perforated window (*jali*) on the south wall of the *mukhamandapa* in the setting of *kalamakara torana* is almost of the same as the sculpture of Venugopala on the south wall of the sanctum (Fig. 12).

NARAYANA: In the setting of the *chaitya arch* on the top of the perforated window, on the north wall of the *mukhamandapa*, figures this bas-relief of Narayana. Lord Vishnu sits on a pedestal with ease accompanied by Sri Devi and Bhu Devi standing on either side. He holds a lotus and a club with his upper hands and a conch and a discus with his lower hands. Below his right leg are the Vishnu *ganas* with hands in the *anjali* pose.

SIVA: The only representation of this deity is the relief sculpture of a standing Siva on the north eastern side of the *mukhamandapa*. It is mutilated and the weapons held in the four hands cannot be identified. Only his animal vehicle namely the Bull, the *urdhva linga* and the *jatamakuta* are conspicuous.

DVARAPALAS: The Dvarapalas, Jaya and Vijaya, sculptured on the door jambs of the sanctum, the frontal porch and the marriage-hall are almost alike. They are adorned with all the ornaments worn by the Vishnu Murtis of the temple. They are all standing murtis holding a *sankha* and a *chakra* with the upper right hands. Of the two lower hands, one rests on a lofty *gada* and the other is held in an *abhaya* pose.

SANKHA AND PADMA NIDHIS: The Sankha and the Padma Nidhis are sculptured in lifesize at the northern and southern corners of assembly-hall. Both are seated on a pedestal two feet high. The hands of both the figures are mutilated. Both are alike, the only points of difference being the conchs sculptured on the sides of Sankha Nidhi and lotuses on the sides of Padma Nidhi. Both wear the usual ornaments (*haras*). Encircling the

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distinguished on the basis of the *distribution* of the four emblems but also classifies the 24 forms in accordance with the suitability of worship to the four *varnas*. See, T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, 228 ff.



figure is the branch of a tree with foliage from which a flower emerges and hangs on the head of the image. Sankha and Padma Nidhis are among the nine treasures of the universe (*nava nidhis*).<sup>32</sup> Symbolizing this aspect, they are aculptured together with Lakshmi, Kubera and the Kalpavriksha. The *Vishnu Dharmottara* describes Kubera as looking over the *nidhis*, and Lakshmi as holding these *nidhis* in her hands.<sup>33</sup> Symbolic representation of these *nidhis* in sculpture dates back to the antiquity of the famous Besnagar capital (2nd century B. C.) in which these *nidhis* are represented together with the boon giving tree (Kalpadruma). The Pallava sculptures from Kaveripakkam in north Arcot depict these *nidhis* in the anthropomorphic form as dwarfs seated by the side of a conch or lotus.<sup>34</sup>

*Sankha* and *Padmanidhis* are referred to also as *dvara-devatas* in some of the *agamic* texts.<sup>35</sup> The *Paramesvara Samhita* describes these *nidhis* as *Dvitiya Gopura dvara-devatas*. They are supposed to be stout figures standing on pedestals of treasure (*nidhi-bhandopari*) with a raised chest, a round belly, short hands and legs, and protruding teeth. In their two hands they may have either a conch and a lotus in either of their hands. In the *Marichi Vimanarchana Kalpa*, they are described as the *dvara-devatas* of the *tritiyavarana*. The *Sankhanidhi* should be in the left wearing a blue apparel, and having a *Sankha* in each hand. He should have the appearance of a demon (*bhutakara*), and the *Padmanidhi* should be on the right wearing a red cloth with a *padma* in each hand. He is hailed as the head of the demons (*bhutanayaka*).<sup>36</sup>

In the Simhachalam Temple these *nidhis* are depicted more like the *Avarana Devatas* guarding the assembly-hall in much

<sup>32</sup> See C. Sivaramamurti's article 'Nidhis - Sankha and Padma, *Bharata Kaumudi*', pp. 849.

<sup>33</sup> Vishnu Dharmottara III 53, 6 and III 82, 7-10.

<sup>34</sup> For these figures see *Bharata Kaumudi*, the 'Nidhis - Sankha and Padma'.

<sup>35</sup> Paramesvara Samhita Verses 72-80; Marichi Vimanarchana, p. 114.

<sup>36</sup> The representation of the *Sankha* and *Padma Nidhis* on the entrance gates date back to an agelong tradition. Kalidasa, in his *Meghaduta*, refers to the *Sankha* and *Padma Nidhis* inscribed on the walls at the entrance gates of a house. *Dvaropanto-likhita - vapusha sankha padmacha drshiva* - See Kalidasa's *Meghaduta*, ii, 19.

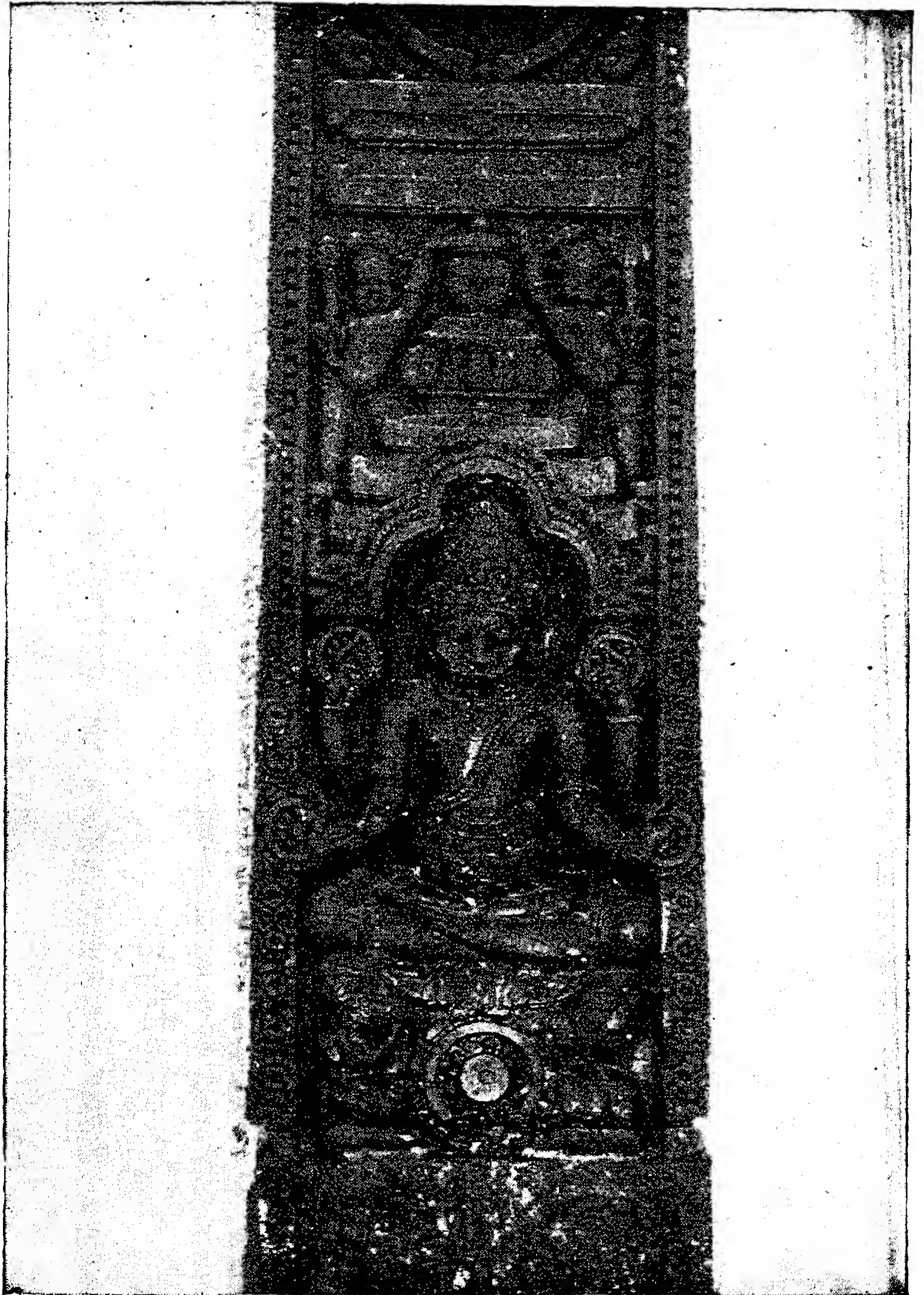


Fig. 28: Chakra-Narasimha

the same way as Jaya and Vijaya are designed to guard the sanctum and the front porch. Their association with the treasure is also to be seen in practice for the treasury in which the jewellery of the Lord is kept are placed on the sides of these *nidhis*.<sup>87</sup>

**ICONS IN THE TIRUCHUTTUMALA:** On each pillar of the back row of the cloister of the temple are carved icons from the Vaishnavaita mythology. Half of these are the different *murtis* of Narasimha. The other forms are the different *avataras* of Vishnu. The Narasimha Murtis are carved on the 1st to the 4th, the 34th to the 56th pillars, and the other *murtis* on the 5th to the 33rd pillars. Each figure is sculptured in the setting of a miniature shrine. Each of the figures are represented as either standing or sitting on a *padmapitha*. The ornamentation conforms to the pattern that obtains in the case of the *parśvadevatas*. A conical cap, elaborate ear-rings a necklace, a pearl *yajnopavita*, a belt with jewelled clasp, and others like the armlets and the anklets adorn each deity. The drapery is scanty, and covers the region from the waist to the knees.

**NARASIMHAMURTIS:** The several sitting and standing images of Narasimha carved on the pillars of the cloister present problems of identification (Figs. 28 to 31). Such forms as Sthauna Narasimha in which he is represented in the act of rending the entrails of a demon, Yoga Narasimha in which he is depicted in the *utkutikasana*, Kevala Narasimha in which he is shown standing alone, and Lakshmi Narasimha in which he is sculptured in a seated posture with Lakshmi on his lap, are well-known. In addition to the usual images common to the medieval period, the temple presents Narasimha in a number of forms which resemble one another, yet differ from each other in minor details. To explain the significance of these figures we have to review all the datable iconographic texts which deal with the Narasimha images and trace the development of the cult.

**THE STORY OF THE PRIMARY FORM:** The story of the Narasimha Avatara, the fourth incarnation of Vishnu, is well-known. The

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<sup>87</sup> One of these Bhandaras has been converted subsequently into a Lakshmi shrine.

Lord rescued Prahlada, his devotee, from the wrath of his father, Hiranyakasipu, the lord of the demons. The demon king, offended with the devotion of his son to Vishnu, the arch enemy of demons, asked him to show that God, so that he could smite him with his sword. Prahlada readily answered saying that Vishnu is present everywhere. His angry father struck a pillar nearby to see if he could find Hari in it when Narasimha came out of the pillar and killed the Demon. The word 'Narasimha', a compound of man (*nara*) and lion (*simha*), gives the idea as to how the form should be, and the very early texts which acquaint us with the image of Narasimha describe him in this form in which he rends Hiranyakasipu with his nails.

THE MATSYA PURANA: The *Matsya Purana*, the earliest of all the *purana* texts (3rd century A. D.), enjoins the making Narasimha form thus.<sup>38</sup> One should represent an image of Narasimha as having eight hands (*bhujasthaka samanvitam*). He must be depicted as fierce, with an open-eyed face, and a shaggy mane and as involved in the act of tearing the entrails of the demon (*vinirgata antrajalam*).<sup>39</sup> Thus this form of Narasimha in action, or Sthauna Narasimha as he is generally known, appears to be the classical form, and in course of time many other aspects were introduced developing on the original theme.

THE VISHNU DHARMOTTARA: The *Vishnu Dharmottara* (7th century A.D.) gives three forms of Narasimha:

I. The first is the well known form of Narasimha depicted as tearing the entrails of Hiranyakasipu with his jaws (*Hiranyakasiporvakshah patayan nakhaih karaih*).

II. The second form is a seated image of Narasimha in *sukhasana*. He should have a conch and a discus in the upper hands. Of the two lower hands, one should be held in an *abhaya* pose and the other should be placed on the head of a gada. Both his feet should be placed in the hands of Bhudevi (*Prithvihastanyastapada*).

III. The third is the figure of Jvala Narasimha. He has a dazzling halo around him, and his body emits flames (*Agnijvala-*

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion of the date of the *Matsya Purana*, see Pargiter's *The Purana Texts of the dynasties of Kali Age*, Introduction, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup> *Matsya Purana*, p. 533.

*kulavartavibhushitatanururah, prabhamandaladurdasah*).<sup>40</sup>

The *Marichi Vimanarchana Kalpa* (6th and 9th centuries): This *Vaikhanasa* religious text, mentions that the Narasimha images can be divided into two varieties, namely, those emerging from the cave (Girija) and those emerging from the column (Sthanuja). Each of these categories is subdivided into two broad categories.

I (a) Girija or Kevala or Yoga Narasimha should be represented as seated on a lotus pedestal with a piece of cloth tied around his waist and thighs (*utkutikasane asayitya urumadhye vastrena bandhya*).

(b) He can also be represented as having four hands and seated in *sukhasana*, holding the usual weapons, flanked by Sridevi and Bhudevi. The upper two hands should be shown to carry a conch and a discus, and of the two lower hands, the left hand can be held either in an *abhaya* pose or in a *varada* pose, and the right one should be shown to be in a *katyavalambita* pose.

II (a) This *sthauna* form of Narasimha should also be represented as seated. Narasimha in this image should be made to look fierce, with his mane falling on his neck, and with sharp teeth and eyes (*sataskanda samyuktam tikshana damshtrekshanam bhayanakam*). As if to pacify this Ugra Narasimha, the sculptor must carve the images of Lakshmi and Prahlada on his left side, and the images of Narada and Ashta Dikpalakas on his right.

(b) *Sthauna* Narasimha can be represented also as standing with 8 or 16 hands looking as if capable of killing a demon (*astabhih dvairastabhirva bhujairyuktam bhayanakam – daityavadhanurupam*).

III. Apart from the Girija and *Sthauna* forms, the *Vaikhana-sagama* acquaints us with a third kind of form described as Yanaka Narasimha which is used for taking the deity in a festival procession. He is to be seated on a Garuda (*visaskandhoparisthti*) and should have four hands holding the four usual weapons.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Vishnu Dharmottara 78, Adhyaya p. 346, the date of the *purana* is fixed at the 7th century – see *Vishnu Dharmottara* (Gaekwad Oriental Series), Introduction, p. 15.

<sup>41</sup> *Marichi Vimanarchanakalpa*, 21 patala, 142 ff. It is difficult to fix the



THE PADMA SAMHITA: The *Pādma Samhita* (8th century), a Pancharatra religious text, points out that the forms of Narasimha are many (*Narasimha Murthih Bahudha*), and acquaints us with three types of Narasimha one with four hands, another with eight hands and the third with sixteen hands.<sup>42</sup>

THE SUMMARY OF THE TEXTS: This review of the texts on iconography from the 3rd century to the 9th century shows that the cult of Narasimha developed in course of time, and the number of the forms of Narasimha multiplied. Narasimha can be represented, according to the developed the cult either in an angry form or in a pacified form. In the angry form, he can be shown to be involved either in the action of rending Hiranyakasipu or as one who had finished the action. In the latter form, he can be shown either standing or sitting with four, eight or sixteen arms. In the pacified form he can be shown in three different ways with Sridevi and Bhudevi, in yogic meditation and on *Garuda*.

THE SCULPTURES IN THE TEMPLE: Now the several images of Narasimha in the Simhachalam temple carved in the 13th century reveal the fact that the sculptor had not only drawn from all these texts, but that he was also influenced by the current meditation formulas (*dhyana mantras*) and panegyrics (*stavas*) which visualise the Lord in several ways. This is quite natural since the temple had already been in existence for over a period of several centuries and must have accumulated a number of these *dhyana mantras* and *stavas*.

THE DHYANA MANTRA AND STAVAS: Various *dhyana mantras* and *stavas* of Narasimha are to be found in the manuscripts. Though the date of this type of literature cannot be fixed, the *slokas* and *stavas* in some cases embody a tradition coming from the medieval times. Since they refer to figures of the

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date of this *Agama* text. However, the prescribed iconographic norms (*pratimalakshanas*) mentioned therein tally to a remarkable degree with the features of the icons of 6th - 8th centuries. Hence the work may be assigned to these centuries. See, J. N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 26.

<sup>42</sup> The *Padmasamhita*, see the Chapter on *pratimalakshana*. Prof. Scharder has fixed the date at the 8th century for the composition of the authoritative texts of the *Pancharatra*. See Scharder's *Introduction to Pancharatra*, p. 19.

temple, we cannot but give weight to their testimony. Particularly the evidence of two manuscripts entitled as *Narasimha Malamantra* and *Narasimha Stavaraja* is of immense value.

**NARASIMHA MALAMANTRA :** The *Narasimha Malamantra* mentions various forms of Narasimha : Varaha Narasimha, Daruna Narasimha, Vidarana Narasimha, Aghora Narasimha, Rukmini Narasimha, and finally Tullukottu Narasimha.<sup>43</sup> It is significant that the *Dhyana Mantra* which is in Sanskrit introduces a Telugu phrase 'tullukottu' (one who brushes things aside). The phrase is an index to the region in which the particular *dhyana sloka* was current.

**NRISIMHA STAVARAJA :** The second work – the *Narasimha Stavaraja* is a panegyric upon Narasimha written in Telugu script and Sanskrit language. It states that just as there are twenty four forms of Vasudeva, and eight forms of *Dikpalas*, there are also thirty two forms of Narasimha.<sup>44</sup> It does not, however, furnish the details of iconography but only gives in some cases, a broad outline of each particular figure.<sup>45</sup>

The Narasimha figures of the temple can now be described. As has already been observed, the ornamental details conform to the pattern of the *Parsva* and *Parivara* deities and hence need not be mentioned in the case of each figure.

**I. ASANA MURTI :** This form of Narasimha, seen on the first pillar of the cloister is a seated image in *padmasana*. In this image Narasimha has four arms with a conch and discus in the upper left and right hands. He holds up his lower right hand in an *abhaya* pose and the other one he rests on the knee. Two small figures which can be identified as Sridevi and Bhudevi can be seen standing on either side of the figure.

This image is a slight variation of Girija Narasimha introduced by the *Vaikhanasa Agama*.

**II. KUNDAPADA NARASIMHA :** Narasimha is seen here seated in *sukhasana*, with his left leg bent and right leg upright and

<sup>43</sup> *Nrisimha Malamantra* (M. S. S.), D. No. 6524 of the catalogue of the Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras.

<sup>44</sup> *Narasimha Stavaraja* (M. S. S.), D. No. 10096 of the catalogue of the Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras.

<sup>45</sup> It must be noted here that the *Kshetramahatmyam* of the Simhachalam temple catalogues these 32 forms of Narasimha without describing their features.

resting on a Kunda flower. His upper two hands hold two jars. Of the two lower hands the right one is held in an *abhaya* pose while the left hand rests on the knee.

This image approximates to the second image mentioned in the *Vishnu Dharmottara*. This form is also referred to in the *Narasimha Stavaraja*. The latter does not mention as to how this image should be made but only asserts that the Kundapada Narasimha has a wonderful form.<sup>46</sup>

III. PRAHLADA ANUGRAHAMURTI : Narasimha in this form stands with a slightly bent body (*abhanga*) (Fig. 31). He has four arms, and the upper hands bear a conch and a discus. His lower left hand is held up in an *abhaya mudra* while the right hand rests on Prahlada.

This image belongs to the *sthauna* form (IIa) of Narasimha introduced by the *Vaikhanasa Agama*. The Lord is seen after the event of killing the demon, i.e., being placated by the entreaties of his devotee.

IV. KHADGA NARASIMHA : This is once again an *asanamurti* like No. I. Narasimha sits in *padmasana*, holds a conch and a discus in his upper hands. The lower right hand shows the *abhaya mudra* while the left one a sword.

V. VIDARANA NARASIMHA : Narasimha is seen on the 36th pillar of the cloister involved in the act of rending. The full body is not carved but only the bust. The Lord in this form has only two arms while substituting the other two hands the big claws are engaged in the act of rending.

This form is referred to in the *stava*.<sup>47</sup> The latter praises *Vidarana Narasimha* as one who rends the chest of Hiranyakasipu with ease.

VI. STHAUNA NARASIMHA : This figure on the next pillar depicts Narasimha as tearing the entrails of the demon. Narasimha is seen here seated with six arms. He places the demon on his slightly raised left knee and tears in his entrails with his two middle hands. The upper two hands bear a conch and a discus and the lower hands two human figures representing

<sup>46</sup> Kundapa Narasimhaya namastedbhuta rupine, Daityanasa nighoraya stambhamadhya stitayacha.

<sup>47</sup> *Vidarana Nrisimhaya hiranya kasiporurah Nakhaiah daravate tubham vajrakalpaistu lilaya.*

the club and the lotus, the usual weapons of Vishnu.

This form, as has been already pointed out, is the classical form of Narasimha with which we are acquainted in the *Matsya Purana*.

VII. SANKHA NARASIMHA: Narasimha in this form sits in *Padmasana* on a conch and holds a discus one in each of the two hands. This form is mentioned in the *stava*. The latter praises Sankha Narasimha as one who holds a conch and strikes terror in the ears of the demons by the sound of his conch.

VIII. DVIBHUJA NARASIMHA: Narasimha here stands with two arms, holding a conch in the left hand, and a discus in the right. As in the other images, two small figures of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi can be seen standing on either side of the *Murti*.

IX. STHANAKA MURTI: Here Narasimha stands on a *padma pitha* and has four arms. His upper back hands hold a *chakra* in the left hand and the *sankha* in the right hand and of the two lower hands the left hand is held up in a *varada* pose while the right one is held in an *abhayamudra*. He is flanked by the two small figures of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi.

X. STHANAKA MURTI: This is essentially the same as the previous one. The only difference lies in the *ayudhas* held in the lower hands. While the upper hands hold a conch and a discus, the lower hands hold *ayudha purushas* symbolising the *padma* and the *gada*.

XI. STHANAKA MURTI: This image is also essentially the same as No. 9. The only difference lies in the disposition of the weapons and hand poses. The upper two hands hold a lotus and a club. The lower left hand is held an *abhaya mudra* and the right one in *varada* pose.

XII. PANCHAMUKHA NARASIMHA: Here Narasimha stands on a *padmapitha* having five faces (four of which are visible from outside) and ten arms. The left five hands show a *gada*, a *chakra*, a *padma*, a *dhanus* and a *ketaka*. The right five hands show a *gada*, a *chakra*, a *padma*, a *parasu* and a *khadga*. The God wears the usual ornaments but a change in the pattern of the sacred thread and necklace can be noticed. He wears a sacred thread which resembles a snake and a necklace composed of small beads (*munda mala*).

The *Narasimha Stavaraja* calls this figure Vira Narasimha. According to the *stava*, the god in this form has five faces and wears a *sarpa yajnopavita* and a *munda mala*.<sup>48</sup>

XIII. ASANAMURTI: Narasimha seen on this pillar sits in *padmasana* holding a conch, a discus, a club and a lotus in the four hands. The image in all respects is similar to No. 1.

XIV. CHAKRA NARASIMHA: Here the God sits in *padmasana* on a discus and holds a discus in each of the four hands (Fig. 28). He wears the usual ornaments. A small kneeling figure of a devotee is included in the sculpture.

The *stava* mentions this form. It praises Chakra Narasimha as one who sits on a discus and slays demons with his discus.<sup>49</sup>

XV. VIRASANAMURTI: Narasimha here sits in *virasana* and has eight arms. He holds a bow, an arrow, a discus and a lotus in his left four hands and a club, a lotus, a conch and a discus, in his right four hands.

This figure is referred to in the *stava* as Raja Narasimha. He sits in *virasana* and commands the guardian deities to seek the welfare of the world.

XVI. YOGA NARASIMHA: Narasimha is seen seated here with his right leg hanging straight down (Fig. 29). The left leg is bent and a piece of cloth binds his left knee and waist. He has four arms. The upper left and right hands hold a conch and a discus respectively. He holds the lower right hand in *abhaya-mudra* while the lower left one rests on the knee. Two small figures of devotees are carved beneath the image. The left one holds the right leg of the Lord while the other one is seen praying.

XVII. ASANA MURTI: Narasimha seen here seated in *padmasana* with four arms is similar to the previous images. The only difference is that a devotee is seated on the lap of the Lord.

XVIII. ASANA MURTI: This image of Narasimha is similar to the previous one but for the fact that in this image the god has eight arms. His right four hands hold a conch, a discus,

<sup>48</sup> *Namaste vira Simhaya pancha vaktyaya bhasvate Chanda sarpopa vitaya munda mala dharayacha.*

<sup>49</sup> *Namaste chakra Simhaya Chakrasana gatayacha prayoga chakra hastaya daitya chakra pramadhine.*





Fig. 29: Yoga-Narasimha

a club and a lotus. His two left upper hands hold a conch and a discus. The third one is held up in *abhaya mudra* and the fourth one is placed on the head of a praying devotee.

XIX. STHANAKA MURTI: This image of Narasimha is similar to the other 'standing' images, already described. The God is seen standing on a pedestal with four arms. He holds a conch and a discus in the upper hands, and human beings representing the club and the lotus.

XX. STHANAKA MURTI: Narasimha here stands on a pedestal like in the last mentioned image and has four arms. The upper hands hold a conch and a discus. The lower right hand is held up as if to hold a lotus while it is not clear what is held in the lower left hand.

XXI. YOGA NARASIMHA: This image of Narasimha is sculptured in the niche between the 51st and 52nd pillars. The figure is similar to the one mentioned under No. XVI. The god sits on a big pedestal and has four arms (Fig. 47). His right leg rests straight on a foot rest. The left leg is bent and a *yogapatta* passes around his left knee and the waist. His upper left hand has a conch and the right one a discus. The two lower hands are mutilated. However, the right one appears to have been held up in an *abhaya* pose and the left one placed on the knee just as in the figure mentioned above.

XXII. YANAKA NARASIMHA: Narasimha is seen seated here on Garuda (Fig. 30). Fully ornamented, he has the canopy of a five-headed Naga. He has four arms. The upper right hand has a conch and the lower is held up in *abhaya mudra*. The upper left hand holds a conch and the lower one rests on the knee. He sits, on the shoulders of Garuda, using the raised hands of Garuda as a foot-rest. Garuda, the divine vehicle of the Lord, is similarly ornamented.

This form of Narasimha is mentioned both in the *Vaikhanasa Agama* (No. IV) and in the *Stava*.<sup>50</sup>

XXIII. VYAGHRA NARASIMHA: Narasimha here assumes the form of a tiger ready to jump on his prey (Fig. 31). He is seated with his hands between his legs, and rests his jaws on the pedestal.

<sup>50</sup> *Akasa Narasimhaya takshan rupayate namah Suryam sudarsanakaram grhitva karta rakshane.*

The *stava* acquaints us with this form and praises Vyaghra Narasimha as one who is capable of killing the demons by jumping on them and tearing them into pieces.<sup>51</sup>

XXIV. The image of Narasimha on this pillar is an unfinished one. Only the face of the man-lion visible.

XXV. VARAHA NARASIMHA: Carved on this last pillar in the cloister are the forms of a boar and the tail of a lion.

This form of Narasimha is mentioned by the *Narasimha-malamantra* and the *Narasimha Stavaraja*. The *stava* hails this Narasimha as a peaceful God, (*santamurtaye*).<sup>52</sup>

### *The other Icons in the Tiruchuttumala*

MATSYA: The Matsya Incarnation of Vishnu is the first figure among the various icons carved on the pillars in the back row of the cloister from the 5th to the 30th pillar. It is rather a peculiar form and shows clearly a deviation from the canons of iconography laid down by the texts. An attempt is made by the sculptor to present two different aspects in one and the same figure: he presents a horizontal fish (*matsya*) and a human form being drawn out of its head vertically down below. The God stands on a *pitha* and has two arms. He holds a discus in the left hand and the right one hangs loose. The ornamentation of the body conforms to a routine pattern of ornamentation in all the sculptures in the cloister. These include anklets, ear-rings, armlets, a sacred thread and a long garland.

The Matsya incarnation of Vishnu is generally depicted either as theriomorphic or as a hybrid form in which the upper half takes the human form and the lower half that of a fish. Both these forms have the sanction of the texts on iconography.<sup>53</sup> The deviation which is to be found in the temple shows the tendency of the times to indulge in complex and syncretic iconography.

KURMA: The icon on the next pillar is the Kurma Incarnation of Vishnu, and is presented in the purely animal form of a tortoise. Above the figure are to be found representations of a conch and a discus.

<sup>51</sup> *Namaste Vyaghrasimhaya vyakta vaktrayate namah Utplutya danujan ghoran nakhaih darayete bhirsam.*

<sup>52</sup> *Simhasaila nivasaya madanugraha karanat Varaha Narasimhaya namaste santa murtaye.*

<sup>53</sup> See T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*.

**BHUVARAHA**: Varaha stands with his left knee raised and placed on the hoods of Adi Seshha (Fig. 27). He holds Bhudevi on his raised knee, spreading his left arm around her shoulders and holding her right leg with his right hand. The upper hands have a conch and a discus.

**KEVALA OR YAJNAVARAHA**: Varaha here stands alone. The upper hands hold conch and a discus while the lower hands a lotus and a club. The God in this image is fully ornamented and stands on a lotus pedestal.

**KODANDARAMA**: Rama stands on the usual pedestal and has two arms. He holds his bow in the left hand and arrows in the right.

**VAMANA**: Vamana stands on the usual pedestal and has short arms and legs. Scantily dressed, he wears a sacred thread and waist tie (*udarabandha*). He holds an umbrella in his left hand and a water-jar (*kamandalu*) in his right.

**KALKI**: Kalki mounted on a horseback is sculptured in a rather crude fashion. He holds a sword with his one hand and holds the reins of the horse with the other.

**NARASIMHA**: The image Narasimha carved on the next pillar contrasts with the sculpture of Kalki and is perfectly executed. The God stands on a pedestal and has six arms. The right three hands have a conch, a club and a lotus. His top left hand holds a conch and the middle one rests on the head of a devotee, while the bottom left hand is placed on the head of Prahlada who appears with folded hands.

**BALARAMA**: Balarama stands underneath the canopy of the hood of a snake with a ploughshare (*hala*) in his left hand and a pestle (*musala*) in his right.

**RAMA**: The figure on the next pillar is mutilated. The God stands on a pedestal with his bow (?) on his left side. The weapon held in the other hand cannot be clearly seen. Hence the identification of the icon is difficult.

**VENUNADHA**: Standing in flexion, with his right arm crossing the left, Lord Krishna is seen here playing on his flute. He is accompanied by two Gopikas on the two sides.

**TRIBHANGIGOPALA**: Seen in the next sculpture is the figure of dancing Krishna on the heads of *Kaliya*. He holds up his lower right hand in an *abhayamudra*, and holds the tail of the serpent *Kaliya* in his left hand.

SARANGAPANI: In this sculpture, Sarangapani stands on a pedestal and has an austere face. The upper hands hold a conch and a discus. Holding up the bow, he raises the lower right hand in an *abhaya mudra*. This bow of Vishnu called Saranga made of horn is supposed to be the source of strength and is associated with the highest aspect of Vishnu.

PARASURAMA: Parasurama stands with a conch and a discus in his upper hands. His lower hands hold a battle axe and a sword.

KESAVA: The Kesava form of Vishnu depicted in the sculpture is to be distinguished by the emblems held in the four hands. He holds a conch and a discus in his upper right and left hands and a lotus and a club in his lower right and left hands respectively.<sup>54</sup>

VISHNU: The sculpture in the next pillar can be identified as the Yogasthanaka Murti of Vishnu. The upper hands hold a conch and a lotus. His lower right hand holds a water-jar (*Kamandalu*) while the left one hangs loose.

MADHAVA: Another image among the twenty four forms of Vishnu, viz., that of Madhava, is carved on the next pillar. His upper right and left hands hold a discus and a conch and the lower hands a club and a lotus respectively.<sup>55</sup>

GARUDARUDHA VISHNU: Vishnu seen in this sculpture has three faces and four arms, and is seated on the kneeling figure of Garuda. Peculiarly enough in his upper hands he holds a trident and a miniature drum (*damaru*), the emblems of Siva. The lower hands present a discus and a club.

This is one of the complex which represents a style of eclectic iconography. We cannot equate the above figure with any known forms of Vishnu.<sup>56</sup>

NARAYANA: Narayana as usual has four arms in this image. His upper left and right hands hold a club and a lotus, while the lower ones hold a discus and a conch respectively.

ASHTABHUJA MURTI: The sculpture on this pillar is unfinished. The form is that of a seated Vishnu with eight arms. The weapons held by the different hands are not clearly visible.

<sup>54</sup> T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 229.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 229.



LAKSHMINARAYANA : Vishnu is seen here seated with Lakshmi in his lap. He has eight arms. His two upper right hands hold a conch and a discus while the corresponding left hands hold a lotus and a club. The third left arms spreads around Lakshmi and touches her left breast. The corresponding right hand is held in *abhayamudra*. Beneath the panel is the sculpture of a kneeling devotee with folded hands.

GOVARDHANA (?) : Vishnu as seen in this sculpture stands on a pedestal and has four arms. His two upper hands are engaged in the act of lifting up some object, which could be a mountain. The lower left hand is held in a *katyavalambita* pose while the right one, in a *varada mudra*. Two small figures of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi are carved on the two sides of the icon.

This is another complex icon of the temple. The sculptures of Govardhanadhari generally conform to a single pattern : they depict the youthful Krishna in his characteristic *tribhangi* posture, lifting a mountain with the little finger of his left hand. But in the above sculpture there is such an entire change of forms that it is difficult to identify it as belonging to this pattern.

VISHNU : Vishnu depicted in this sculpture looks rather peculiar. He stands on the usual pedestal but has only two arms. The weapons held in these two hands are by no means clearly discernible. His left hand grasps an object which resembles a *damaru* (?) and the right one, an object which resembles a *gada* (*ankusa*?). Strangely enough, the deity has even a moustache.

VISHNU : The sculpture is that of a standing image of Vishnu. The upper hands hold a conch and a discus while the lower hands are held up in *abhaya* and *varada mudras*.

YOGASANA MURTI : Vishnu is depicted as seated in *padmasana*. His upper hands hold a conch and a discus, and lower hands present *abhaya* and *varada mudras*.

YOGASANAMURTI (?) : In this sculpture Vishnu sits in *padmasana* wearing a *yogapatta* on crossed legs. His upper hands hold a conch and a discus and the upper two hands express the *vyakhyana* and *suchi* poses. Of particular interest are the cap and the ear-rings. The cap resembles a turban and the ear-rings are big and round.

This is another of the complex figures of the temple. The cap worn by the deity is rarely to be found elsewhere.

GOVINDA : Govinda who stands on the usual pedestal can be readily identified by the weapons he holds in his four hands.<sup>57</sup> The upper left and right hands carry a lotus and a club and the lower hands a discus and a club.

YOGASANA MURTI : Vishnu as represented in the sculpture is seated in *padmasana*. The objects held by him in his four hands are not clearly distinguishable. A lotus and a water-jar held in the lower left and right hands respectively can be identified.

BHOGASANA MURTI : Vishnu is seated in this image in *sukhasana* with his right leg folded. The upper hands hold a discus and a conch and the front hands present a club, and the *varadamudra*. Seen below the icon is the figure of a standing devotee.

MADHUSUDANA : Madhusudana stands on the usual pedestal and could be distinguished by the weapons held in his four hands. The upper hands hold a lotus and a conch and the lower hands a club and a discus.

VIGHNESVARA : The sculpture of a standing Vighnesvara lies on the 52nd pillar on the southwestern corner in the cloister. He has four arms and the lower hands hold a conch and a lotus. The weapons held by the other hands are not clearly distinguishable. The proboscis bends towards the left holding a candy.

ICONS IN THE MARRIAGE-HALL : The icons of the marriage-hall are carved on the rectangular panels of the pillars, and the sides of the corbels of most of the pillars of the hall. Some of the sculptures appearing on the outer faces of the pillars are mutilated, and some others are obscured by the thick coat of white-wash. They, however, harp on the theme of the incarnations of Vishnu and are in most cases repetitions of the figures found in the cloister.

### Conclusion

The sculptures in the temple hold a great attraction to the

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<sup>57</sup> See T. A. Gopinatha Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part. I p. 229.

pilgrims that visit the temple. The connoisseurs witnessing the icons and the stylized designs may lament over degeneration of the sculpture of the 13th century. But the layman appreciates in full measure its “charm, infinite variety and the marvellous skill which used stone like metal”.

# Inscriptions

The Simhachalam Temple is a veritable treasure house of inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> The bulk of the inscriptions are incised on the inner walls and pillars of the cloister of the temple. The very early inscriptions, because of the renovation of the 13th century, are found only at places like the Alvar Sannidhi, the outer walls of the assembly-hall, the marriage-hall and the porch near Gangadhara.

**NATURE OF INSCRIPTIONS :** The main purpose of all the records, whether they are incised by kings or private individuals, is to donate gifts in kind and or in cash to the Lord for their wealth, prosperity and progeny.<sup>2</sup> These donations are usually meant for the upkeep of a service or a *bhoga* or to reward men connected in some way with the temple.<sup>3</sup> Though the main purpose of the inscriptions is donative, they supply the historian valuable

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<sup>1</sup> The inscriptions have been copied first by the Madras Epigraphical Department during the year 1899 and were published in the Epigraphy Report of the year. The temple was once again visited by the staff of the Department in 1926 for verification of the earlier work. All the texts were published in 1927 in Vol. VI of *South Indian Inscriptions*. We can offer nothing but praise for the work carried on by the Epigraphy Department. In spite of my most exhaustive search, I could discover only a single inscription on the outerwall of the *antarala* and a few broken lines in the kitchen room and in *Tripurantaka Sannidhi* which have not been copied by the Epigraphy Department. Even this inscription on the *antarala* is not of much consequence. It is a private inscription recording an endowment for an *akhandadipa*. It is dated Saka 1097 (A. D. 1175) - See Appendix No. II.

<sup>2</sup> To cite examples: No. 888 registers a gift of 12 *madras* to the temple for the supply of two *Yajnopavitas* to the Lord. No. 785 registers a gift of a piece of land to feed seven brahmins every day. There is also a rare instance where customs duties of the state of a particular area were endorsed in favour of the temple authorities. Thus in A. D. 1476 Purushottama Deva of the Gajapati dynasty donated to the temple an annual income of 500 *tankas* which the state used to get as taxes from the mountain range.

<sup>3</sup> The donations are usually meant for the upkeep of an *akhandadipa*, or



Fig. 30: Yanaka-Narasimha



details of political and social history by mentioning the name of the king holding sway over the region and by giving details of the date and nature of the grant and of the antecedents of the recipient.

**RECKONINGS:** Inscriptions of the Simhachalam temple like the inscriptions of other temples offer a valuable guide to the chronology of the political as well as social life of the medieval times beginning from the last quarter of the 11th century and ending in the first quarter of the 17th century. Thus it will be interesting to know the different calendar reckonings employed in the inscriptions.

(1) The most usual instances are the inscriptions in which the Saka date is given in Sanskrit verse, which forms the beginning phase of each inscription, followed by the numerical Saka date which obtains in the body of the inscriptions. However, in certain instances, the date is given only in one of the two ways mentioned above. But once the Saka date is given it is not difficult to calculate the exact equivalent in the Christian Era provided the astronomical details are also supplied therein.<sup>4</sup> A few errors in reading have crept into the inscriptions published by the Government Epigraphist. Thus inscription No. 756 gives the Saka date 1035 which is actually 1305. The date given in the Sanskrit verse 'Sakabde nidhi khendu ganite' (S. 109) in No. 1172 is wrong.

(2) The next variety of calendar reckonings is the one made in the regnal years of the kings. If the actual period of the king's reign is known from other inscriptions, it is not difficult to calculate the date of the inscription. The inscriptions of the Ganga and Gajapati kings present a curious reckoning of the regnal years. The regnal years are given in what is known as the Anka Chakra.<sup>5</sup> In this reckoning the 1st year, the 6th

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for services like *chamara seva*, *tomala seva*, or for a food offering (*Bhoga*). Temple servants, men of piety and adepts in various arts also received donations.

<sup>4</sup> There are a number of instances where though the Saka date is mentioned the cyclic year is not. For example, No. 754 gives only the day, the month, the fortnight and the tithi. Even in this instance, with the help of the Ephemeris, the equivalent date in the Christian Era can be calculated.

<sup>5</sup> In the present state of our knowledge, it cannot be explained why the

year, and the numbers of years ending either with zero (excepting 10) or six are omitted. To cite an example, an inscription of Narasimha IV of the Ganga dynasty equates the 31st regnal year of the king with S.1324 (A.D. 1402).<sup>6</sup> The king ascended the throne in A.D. 1377 and hence the above equation might appear incorrect. But the 31st *anka* comes only to the 25th if all the necessary omissions are made, and thus the 31st regnal year does correspond to A.D. 1402 (1377+25), and not to A.D. 1408.

(3) Another peculiar calendar reckoning is to be found in inscriptions Nos. 714 and 938 of the temple. No. 714 mentions the 13th regnal year of Devadideva Sri Jagannadha Devara and No. 938 gives the 9th regnal year of Devadideva Purushottama. Both these inscriptions give Saka dates S. 1214 (A.D. 1319) and S. 1236 (A.D. 1314) respectively. The dates of the inscriptions fall in the reign of Bhanudeva II (A.D. 1306-28). In an attempt to explain the significance of this reckoning, it must be noted in the first instance that these two inscriptions are not the only instances in which this reckoning is adopted. There are two other inscriptions which adopt the same kind of calendar reckoning and which fall within the reign of the same king Bhanudeva II. These are: (i) the Puri copper-plate inscription of Bhanudeva dated the 7th *anka* of Purushottama Deva.<sup>7</sup> (ii) The Srikurmam stone Inscription dated the 3rd regnal year of Jagannadhadeva.<sup>8</sup> There is also a third inscription belonging to the closing years of the reign of Ananga Bhima III (A.D. 1211-1238), which mentions for the first time the regnal years as "Purushottama Deva pravardhamana vijaya rajya samvatsara".<sup>9</sup>

R. D. Banerji, the earliest scholar who attempted to solve the riddle, has sought to explain the discrepancies in the inscriptions of Bhanudeva by regarding Purushottama as an usurper "who kept Bhanudeva II virtually a prisoner in the interior of

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Gangas and Gajapatis adopted this mode of reckoning. It may be mentioned, however, that the *Anka Chakra* is still used in Oriya calendars and by astrologers in Orissa in preparing horoscopes.

<sup>6</sup> S. I. I., Vol. VI. No. 1016.

<sup>7</sup> See, Mehatab, *History of Orissa*, 249 ff.

<sup>8</sup> S. I. I., Vol. V, No. 1214.

<sup>9</sup> E. I., Vol. XXX.

his palace at Puri".<sup>10</sup> But recently a number of writers who took a comprehensive view of the entire problem, correctly realized that 'Purushottama' or 'Jagannadha' stands not for a king but for Lord Jagannadha of Puri.<sup>11</sup> This view is amply illustrated by the Srikurmam Inscription which, while referring to the 3rd regnal year of Jagannadha, mentions that it coincided with the reign (*veharana*) of Bhanudeva.<sup>12</sup>

This practice of counting the regnal years in the name of Lord Purushottama started with Ananga Bhima III (1211-38) of the Ganga Dynasty. In an inscription hailing from Bhuvaneswar, the latter describes himself as feudatory and counts his regnal years in the name of Purushottama.<sup>13</sup> The Madala Panji, the traditional chronicle preserved in Puri temple, explains the significance of this practice. According to it, the devotion of Ananga Bhima to Lord Jagannadha of Puri was so great that he dedicated all his kingdom to the Lord and ruled it as His representative.<sup>14</sup> That this tradition has a substratum of truth is borne out by inscriptions. The Ganga kings starting from Ananga Bhima described themselves in their inscriptions with the title '*rauta*' or 'feudatory'.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, in the various inscriptions mentioned above Bhanudeva II was continuing the practice started by Ananga Bhima III.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa*, p. 228.

<sup>11</sup> D. C. Sircar is the first to explain this. See, *Indian Culture*, Vol. VI, p. 73, Mehatab's *History of Orissa*, p. 226, and M. S. Sarma, in the *Telugu Vijnana Sarvaswamu*, Vol. III.

<sup>12</sup> The inscription from Srikurman (S. I. I. Vol. V, No. 1214 reads thus : "Sakavarshambulu 1231 gu nenti Sri Jagannadhadevara Vijaya rajya samvatsaramulu 3 gu srahikanya sukla 5 gu guruvara nuna Srivira-bhanudeva Jiyyanam gari veharanam nandu".

<sup>13</sup> See D. C. Sircar's account on the Lingaraja Inscription of Anangabhima. E. I., Vol. XXX.

<sup>14</sup> The Madala Panji attributes the construction of Puri temple also to Anangabhima, but this is not supported by epigraphic evidence. The king might have completed the work of construction started by Anantavarma Chodaganga (See Mehatab's *History of Orissa*, p. 204).

<sup>15</sup> See D. C. Sircar op. cit. E. I. Vol. XXX.

<sup>16</sup> This practice appears to have continued in the time of Gajapatis. An inscription (No. 699) from the Simhachalam Temple of Saka 1457 (A. D. 1535) mentions that one Kurmamudali installed an image of Hanumantha at the instance of Lord Jagannadha (Jagannadhuni ajnanu). As mentioned by D. C. Sircar, even some of the *maharajas* of

This practice, it may be observed in conclusion bears resemblance to the practice adopted by the Vijayanagara rulers who ruled the kingdom considering themselves as representatives of the God Virupaksha.<sup>17</sup>

INSCRIPTIONS AS SOURCE MATERIAL: The inscriptions of the Simhachalam Temple are eminently useful for reconstructing the political history of the region. Simhachalam was like a landmark in the Kalinga region. All the kings who claimed authority over this part of Kalinga invariably incised their inscriptions on the walls of the temple. The temple inscriptions not only provide the basis of the chronology of the Ganga kings starting from Ananga Bhima III, but also enlighten us on the political fortunes of the dynasty.<sup>18</sup> The inscriptions are indispensable for the reconstruction of the history of the feudatory families like the Matsyas of Oddadi, the Chalukyas of Elamanchi, the Pallavas of Virakutam, the Silavamsa chiefs of Nandapura, the Koppula chiefs and the chiefs of Korukonda. The inscriptions throw light on the age-long conflict between the kings of Kalinga and the kings of coastal Andhra. The earliest instance of the conflict was the fight between Indravarma of the Ganga dynasty and Indra Bhattaraka of the Vishnu Kunda family.<sup>19</sup> This occurred in the 6th century but the conflict recurred in the medieval times between the Gangas and the Chalukya Cholas, the Gangas and the Kakatiyas, the Gangas and the Reddis and finally between the Gajapatis and the Vijayanagar rulers. Simhachalam inscriptions are thus of help even for the study of the dynasties that ruled over Andhra.

It must be stated, however, that the Simhachalam inscriptions though numerous cannot compare with the inscriptions

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Puri regard themselves even now as servants of Jagannadha.

<sup>17</sup> Inscriptions of Vijayanagara kings invariably acknowledge the authority of Virupaksha at the end of each inscription.

<sup>18</sup> K. V. Subrahmanyam Aiyar in his *Introduction to South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. VI, observes thus: "These (the Simhachalam Inscriptions together with the records of Draksharama published in Vol. IV and those of Mukhalingam and Srikurmam printed in Vol. V, place before the student of ancient history enough material for working out a connected and clear account of the Eastern Ganga kings of Kalingadesa."

<sup>19</sup> See *supra*, chapter II.

hailing from Tanjore or Chidambaram temples in the reconstruction of social history. The Inscriptions do not throw sufficient light on such important matters like temple ritual and administration. They contain clues to social and cultural history only to a limited extent. The only exception to the rule is the inscription of *Saka* 1213 (A. D. 1291) issued by a general of Narasimha II of the Ganga dynasty.<sup>20</sup> The inscription describes in graphic detail the cultural life that obtained on the premises of the temple in the 13th century.

**INSTRUCTIVE TERMS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS :** The Simhachalam inscriptions contain a few references to the architectural and iconographic terms contained in the Hindu *Silpa Sastras*. Firstly, an inscription of *Saka* 1190 mentions the terms “*vimana*, *mukhamandapa* and *natyamandapa*” and also refers to the stone used in building the temple as the ‘*Nallarayi*’, or black stone (granite).<sup>21</sup> The way in which the inscriptions use the term *vimana* is instructive. It is applied to the whole structure containing the sanctum and not just to the ‘tower’ portion as is the case in common parlance. Secondly, the inscription also refers to the cloister that surrounds the *vimana* and the *mukhamandapa* as ‘*tiruchuttumala*’.<sup>22</sup> Thirdly, another inscription mentions a *parśva devata* carved on the outer walls of the sanctum by name as Yajna Varaha.<sup>23</sup>

The inscriptions also contain references to various types of coins and measures current at the time. The following types of coins are mentioned: *vendi tanka*, *mada*, *gandamada*, *tyagimada*, *mallamada*, *matsyagadya*, *chinna* and *varaha*.<sup>24</sup> The dry measures referred to in the inscriptions are interesting since they are still in vogue in some parts of the district. They are: *sola*, *manika*, *kuncha*, *tumu* and *putti*.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, No. 904.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, No. 1142.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> See S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 705, 715, 760, 812. The coinage of the medieval times is of two varieties: first *tankas* made of silver, and second *madas* of different names made of gold. According to tradition, 8 *tankas* are equivalent to one *mada* and two *madas*, to one *varaha* (*pagoda*). *Chinna* is one tenth of a *mada*.

<sup>25</sup> S. I. I. Vol. VI, Nos. 698, 706, 709, 1166 and 1188. The equivalences



LANGUAGE AND SCRIPT: Written in the later variety of Telugu-Canarese script, the language of the majority of inscriptions is Telugu. Out of a total of 525 there are 4 inscriptions written in Tamil characters and 35 in Oriya characters. There are a number of instances of bilingualism, and a good number of inscriptions begin with a Sanskrit verse and are followed by Telugu prose. There are also a few inscriptions which combine both Oriya and Telugu. But what is noteworthy in this context is the fact that the Telugu of the inscriptions is different from the Telugu found in other temple inscriptions of coastal Andhra. It is suffused through and through with the influence of Oriya language, a legacy which resulted from the contact of the temple with the Gangas of Varanasi Kataka.<sup>26</sup> The occurrence of Oriya words in the midst of a Telugu text is quite common.<sup>27</sup> In a number of instances, the language is faulty. We come across numerous instances of words in which the vowels are either shortened or lengthened incorrectly.<sup>28</sup> There are also instances where the letters lack a breathing where there ought to be one.<sup>29</sup> Another most common error is the use of 'i' for 'yi'.<sup>30</sup> The inscriptions show on the whole that the language prevalent was by no means chaste.

The value of the inscriptions, it must be observed in conclusion, is lessened to a certain extent by the difficulties encountered in their study. The execution of the inscriptions is itself far from being perfect. The inscriptions of the temple cannot compare with those at Srikurmam. The inscriptions of the Srikurmam, incised as they were on the square blocks of stone that lay

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of measure are as follows :

2 *solas* = 1 *seer*, 2 *seers* = 1 *manika*, 2 *manikas* = 1 *kuncham*, 100 *kunchams* = 1 *tumu*, 2 *tumus* = 1 *putti*.

<sup>26</sup> Dr. B. Subba Rao rightly observes that the 'political mutilations and the variation in the physical features will account for dialectic geography of the Telugu language, which clearly shows the influence of the rulers and the people with whom the area came into contact'. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. IX, p. 179,

<sup>27</sup> S.I.I. Vol. VI, Nos. 20, 792, 689. Words like *behara*, *adhikare*, *majji*, *thavupatti*, are examples of this kind.

<sup>28</sup> 'Adivaaramu' for 'Adivaramu' (No. 714), 'tamaaku' for 'tamaku' (No. 783).

<sup>29</sup> 'Pradani' for 'Pradhani' (No. 781).

<sup>30</sup> Nei for Neyi.

at the centre of the shaft, are as beautiful as they are clear. In the Simhachalam temple, the main bulk of the inscriptions obtains on the wall of the cloister. The incision is neither deep nor clear. This explains the errors that had crept into the reading of the inscriptions. The language is corrupt with the influence of the Oriya language. Again in the preservation of the inscriptions not much care has been taken. Some of them are covered with white-wash while others are obscured by the modern constructions built on them. It is of paramount importance that sufficient care be bestowed in preserving the inscriptions at least at this stage. For, in spite of their limitation, the inscriptions, of the Simhachalam temple are indispensable for a study of the political and cultural history of the region.

## Conclusion

The regions around the Simhachalam Temple can aptly be termed as a 'low-pressure' area in the sense that its development was occasioned by external influences rather than indigenous creativity. Just as air from different quarters rushes to a 'low-pressure' area, the influences from different regions made their imprint on the region and shaped its political and cultural history. On the political plane, the region became the bone of contention between the royal dynasties situated to its north and south. As a consequence, the Gangas, the Gajapatis on one side, the Chalukya Cholas, the Kakatiyas, the Reddis and the Vijayanagar rulers on the other exerted their influence on this region. The administration, the ritual, cultural life, architecture, sculpture and epigraphy of the temple reveal the influences from the regions of Orissa, Andhra and Tamilnad. Thus the interest of the Simhachalam Temple lies in its variety of enrichment.

The peculiar setting of the Simhachalam hill made it a political outpost. In the first instance the Chalukya Cholas established an outpost on the precincts of the temple. Later the Gangas and the Gajapatis held sway over the temple against all intrusions. Since those who wanted to conquer this region had to take possession of the temple, the history of the temple registers automatically the history of the dynastic struggle that convulsed the medieval South India.

The study of the temple would give us an insight into the social stratification and organisation of the times. The Boyas, the Dasaris, the Nayakas and the Sanis were employed by the temple for specific functions connected with the temple. For example, the *Dasaris*, who originally belonged to the Sudra caste, were initiated into the Vaishnava religion, were accorded, the status of a Sudra of pure lineage, worthy of admission to the sanctum. Since they were employed to serve the Lord, they



Fig. 31: Vyaghra-Narasimha

described themselves as 'dasarīs' and in course of time formed into a distinct sub-caste. In a similar fashion the Boyas, the Nayakas and the Sanis, though they were not accorded any special status, by virtue of the specific functions they performed in the temple, each group constituted itself as a class which later rose to be a sub-caste.

The Simhachalam temple, like other temples of the land represented more the outward projection of peoples' inner spiritual aspirations. It used to be a centre where the community gathered around to satisfy their religious and cultured life. The people as well as the kings endowed the temple and this enriched the liberal arts, each one of them comprising one means of dedication to the deity. In an indirect way the temple also served as a means to transfer the wealth from the more wealthy sections of the community to the less favoured and deserving sections of the community. The Telugu proverb that the temple is a better place of security than the house offers a clue to the economic, social and political status of the temple. It was a place where one could at any time expect not only food and shelter but also security and solace.

The role of the temple in modern times has changed considerably. It is now primarily a religious institution nourished by the patronage of the people. Its rules and regulations, however, are guided by a manual which is secular in its nature. In the medieval times the functionaries were governed by an unwritten religious code which was maintained by the simple beliefs that its abrogation would be a sacrilege. In the modern era, the texture of the life in general, tend to decrease the hold of the earlier sacraments. This is a problem which has to be tackled with care by the secular administration of the present century.



# Appendix I

A descriptive catalogue of the documents of the modern period available at the Collector's Office, Visakhapatnam

1. The Khām Bhogaṭṭa of Simhāchalam. From Fasli 1206 (1796) to 1208 (1798). This document, now preserved in Collector's Office at Visakhapatnam, mentions the various sources of income of the temple. The temple used to have under its control 2 villages, 10 gardens and 12 springs and receive the following amounts on the various sources :

Leases of markets	Rs. 200
Kappa Stambhamu	Rs. 45
Sannidhi	Rs. 18
Lease of the right to sell oil	Rs. 250
Collections in the main Sannidhi	Rs. 1,185

2. The Khām Bhogaṭṭa of Simhāchalam from Fasli 1213 (1803) to Fasli 1213 (1813). The contents of this document are similar to that of No. 1. The income of the temple increased and it touched Rs. 3,000/—.

3. The Haki battu of Simhachalam Fasli 1213 (A.D. 1813-14). This contains a statement of the village that lay on the hill of Simhāchalam. In that year the population statistics were as follows :

	Adults		Children	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Brahmins	12	18	5	39
Konda Doras	16	12	8	41
Non-brahmins	50	54	10	126
	—	—	—	—
	78	84	23	206
	—	—	—	—

4. A statement of functionaries of the Simhāchalam Temple prepared by Kastūri Appayya Pantulu at the instance of the Collector of Visakhapatnam in Fasli 1244 (A.D. 1834). The statement is a comprehensive list of the various functionaries

together with the emoluments they received. The total number of functionaries is 267 and their emoluments ranged from Rs. 3/- to Rs. 30/- (per annum). In addition to the salary, the important functionaries received *kaṭṭadis* (fixed quotas of Rājabhoga).

5. A statement regarding the regulations of the various leases relating to the Simhāchalam Temple. The original of this statement issued by the Collector of Visakhapatnam in 1835 has been lost. A copy of the same is preserved in the Devasthanam Office. The statement contains elaborate details regarding the disposition of all gifts, given by the devotees to the Lord. It stipulates the particular items which had to be enjoyed by those who leased out the sources of income, those items that have to be enjoyed by the priests and finally the cash which had to be submitted to the treasury.

6. Statements of expenditure for the Kalyāṇam festival, for the years Fasli 1249 (A. D. 1839) and Fasli 1250 (A. D. 1840). The total expenditure was Rs. 875/- and Rs. 922/-, respectively.

7. A statement of the expenditure of the Chandanayātra festival for Fasli 1249 (A. D. 1839). This shows that the expenditure on various items amounted to Rs. 989/-. The statement is prepared by Koṭṭu Mussaddi, checked by the Majumdar of the Sannidhi and forwarded by the Peshkar to the Amin of Padagāḍi. Thus it mentions the officials of the temple at that time.

8. A statement of expenditure for the whole temple including the amounts for a repair of the temple in Fasli 1250 (A. D. 1840). This is a comprehensive list of expenses which showed all the phases of the life of the temple. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 15,531/-.

9. A statement of income of the temple. This shows that the land yielding a rental value of Rs. 16,000/- was earmarked by the Zamindars of Vizianagaram for the temple.

10. Inam Fair Register : The register enumerates the lands belonging to the temple in 14 villages endowed by the Zamindars of Vizianagaram together with the revenues and the title deed numbers.

# Appendix II

## INSCRIPTIONS OF THE TEMPLE

King	No. in S.I.I. VI	Location	Date in Saka era	Charac- ters	Summary of Contents
1	2	3	4	5	6
Chalukya Cholas and Mandalikas					
1. Kulottunga	1172	On a pillar in the Āḷvār shrine	10(0)9	Telugu	Donative. Records a gift of a garden for the enjoyment of the Lord by a merchant of Penugonḍa. The śaka date given in the Sanskrit verse is incorrect.
2. - do -	1144	On a loose slab lying in front of mukha- mandapa	1021	Tamil	Damaged. Gives the <i>pugal suenda praśasti</i> of Kulottunga I. Records gifts of the officers of the King Karunākara Ācharya and Madhurāntaka Brahmaṛāyar to the temple. Mentions Śrī Bhaṇḍāra. The inscription mentions also that the endow- ment is placed under the protection of the Vaishnava community of the place, a fact which is repeated in every subse- quent inscription.
3. Rājarāja	1174	On a pillar in the Āḷvār shrine	1073	Telugu	Donative. Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> by one Yerrapotu.

1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Chodarāja	1181	On the wall of āsthānamandapa	1164	Telugu	Donative. Similar type of endowment by Kona Chodaraja. Mentions the measure of the temple as 'Narasimha Kuñcha'. Records the fact that Mangirāja, a <i>mahamanālesvara</i> , and scion of Nāgavamsa made an endowment for a perpetual lamp. Records the fact that the king made a gift of sheep for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp.
5. Mangirāja	1186	On the South wall of the āsthānamandapa	1120	"	
6. Gokarāja	1141	On the 54th pillar of the niche	1192	"	
7. Menṭavahe-neśvara	1200	On the east wall of bhogamandapa	1199	"	Donative. Similar type of endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> in the temple by the king's mother.
The Gangas					
1. Aniyanka Bhima III	1180	On south wall of āsthānamandapa	1138	Telugu	Records a gift of seven <i>mādas</i> by a minister of the king.
2. -do-	1209	In the niche to the left of Lakshmi shrine	1139	"	Incomplete. Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> by an officer of the king.
3. -do-	1201	In the āsthānamandapa	1141	"	Donative. Similar type of an endowment by a <i>senāpati</i> of the king.
4. Narasimha I	1188	N. wall of mandapa in front of Ālvār shrine	1149	"	Damaged. Records a gift of ten <i>mādas</i> for the conduct of a festival.
5. -do-	1207	On the W. entrance to āsthānamandapa	22nd regnal year	"	Records an endowment for <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> by Ganga Devi, the queen mother.

6.	-do-	1197	On a beam built into the roof of the store room	1186	„	Important inscription. Records the fact that the king instituted an endowment for the maintenance of 100 dancers ( <i>Sānis</i> ) given to the temple by him. The king is compared to Purūrava.
7.	Bhānudeva I	1213	On a pillar in the mandapa near Gangadhāra	1187	„	Records the gift of Vallabha Sāhasamalla for the longevity of the king.
8.	-do-	1142	On the 55th pillar in the tiruchuṭṭumāla	1190	„	Important inscription. Records the fact that a commander built the <i>śrī vimāna mukhamanḍapa</i> , <i>nāṭyamandapa</i> , <i>tiruchuṭṭumāla</i> of the temple in black stone under orders from Vira Śrī Narasimhadeva. Also records further endowments by the same person.
9.	-do-	719	On a third pillar in tiruchuṭṭumāla	1200	„	Records a gift of cows to the temple for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp on Kārtika Dipavali by an officer of the king. The language of the inscription shows some peculiarities. The word 'i' is written for 'yi'. The doubling of the consonant 't' is omitted in the word ' <i>peina</i> '. The right spelling is ' <i>peṭṭina</i> '.
10.	Narasimha II	1118	On 49th pillar in the tiruchuṭṭumāla	1203	„	Records gifts of the officers of the king on the Akshayatritiya. Mentions <i>koshṭa karanamu</i> (accountant).
11.	-do-	904	On the 23rd niche in the tiruchuṭṭumāla	1213	„	Most important inscription. Begins in Sanskrit. Registers numerous endowments of Nārāyana Mahā Senāpati, an officer of



	1	2	3	4	5	6
						the king. Shows that the temple was a cultural centre.
12.	Narasimha II	928	25th niche in the tiruchuttumāla	1213	Telugu	An endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> by an officer of the king.
13.	„	1140	53rd niche in the tiruchuttumāla	1215	„	A similar type of gift by one Vallabha Nambyālu on Akshayatriya.
14.	„	932	32nd*	1218	„	Records the gift of a piece of land by Nārāyana <i>pradhāni</i> , an officer of the king. Mentions <i>bhandārādhikāri</i> .
15.	„	935	26th*	1219	„	A gift of cows for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp by an officer of the king.
16.	„	957	29th*	1219	„	Records a similar type of gift by a lady.
17.	„	941	27th*	1221	„	Registers an endowment made by Varadagiri Śrīpādālu for several Sānis in the temple engaged in the musical recital in front of the Lord. Mentions Jnānananda Bhattāraka, a pupil of Varadagiri Śrīpādālu.
18.	Bhanudeva II	1172	On a pillar in the <i>āsthānamandapa</i>	1228	„	Records a combined gift of the officers of the king.
19.	„	1179	On a pillar near <i>āsthānamandapa</i>	1228	„	Incomplete. Seems to record gifts by several officers of the king. Varadagiri Śrīpādālu.
20.	„	1000	34th*	1229	„	Records the gift of the Chālukya Chief Viśwanadha along with other officers of the king. Mentions several functionaries of the temple including Varadagiri

21.	„	1002	34th*	1229	„	Śrīpādālu, the <i>bhoga pariksha</i> . Records the fact that Viśwanatha, the Chālukya chief erected a <i>mandapa</i> called <i>Dhārmandapa</i> . The record attests that the Chālukyas accepted the suzerainty of the Gangās.
22.	„	938	26th*	1236	„	Records the gift of a flower-garden and endowment for Dāsaries by an officer of the king. The record is dated the 9th regnal year of Devādideva Purushottama-deva. Begins with a Sanskrit verse.
23.	Narasimha III	1003	34th*	1262	„	Records that the king instituted a <i>bhoga</i> , ( <i>Viranarasimha bhoga</i> ) in the temple for his own merit.
24.	„	940	26th*	13th R. year	„	An endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> made by an officer of the king.
25.	„	933	25th*	1271	„	Records the fact that Gāngamahādevi, wife of the king, donated a number of gifts both in cash and in kind for her own merit. These include gold sandals, different gold and silver articles. Mention torchbearers ( <i>divyakolapattēvāru</i> ).
26.	„	932	25th*	1272	„	Records the fact that the same queen instituted several <i>nibandhanās</i> in favour of the temple servants for her own merit. These are: <i>Dāsaries</i> who worked on flower gardens, <i>Dāsīs</i> and others.

(29)

\*niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	Narasimha III	1052	40th*	1272	Telugu
					Records the fact that the same queen Gāngamahādevi instituted a <i>bhoga</i> , Gānga Narasimha Bhoga, in the temple for her own merit and made a number of gifts of villages to the temple. Describes a musical party of the Sānis. Refers to temple servants. An important inscription.
28.	„	1053	40th*	1275	„
					Records the information that the same person instituted <i>nibandhana</i> for the reading of a <i>purāna</i> in the temple. Astronomical details of the inscription are slightly wrong. Kārtika Śukla Ekādaśi should be Kārtika Śukla Asthami.
29.	Bhanudeva III	1046	40th*	1275	„
					Records the gifts of the king for the merit of his father Viranarasimha and his mother Gangādevi. Mentions the priests of the temple as Tirupati Śrivaishnavulu. An endowment for one Rāmavaishnava for conducting a service in the temple. Registers the gift of an officer of the king.
30.	„	1049	40th*	R.year 3	„
31.	„	1078	42nd*	R.year 8	„
32.	„	772	10th*	1293	„
					Registers the gift of a piece of land, in favour of a dancer Madanarekha, by an officer of the king.
33.	„	751	8th*	1298	„
					Records a similar type of gift to one Tantrasāni by an officer of the king. This

34.	Narasimha IV	730	6th*	1301	„	Tantrasāni is supposed to serve the Lord in the evening service. Records the gift of a piece of land by the king to one Umādevi who is to serve the Lord in the conduct of Gānga Narasimha Bhoga.
35.	„	741	16th*	1302	„	Records the gifts of the king to Nārāyana-jiyana for the fruition of the king's own wishes. This Nārāyanajiyana is to serve the Lord both in the morning as well as in the evening service.
36.	„	769	8th*	1304	„	Registers an endowment for the <i>Vinjāmara Seva</i> by one Someśwara jiyana.
37.	„	752	8th*	1305	„	Records that the queens Birūja Devi and Tāra Devi gave to the temple two Vinjāmaras and instituted <i>nibandhanas</i> for two Sānis to perform the <i>seva</i> .
38.	„	753	8th*	1305	„	Records a similar type of gift and endowment by Queen Tārādevi.
39.	„	1127	50th*	1309	„	Records the information that the king's officer instituted a service in the temple for the merit of the king.
40.	„	1006	35th*	1311	„	Records Birūjādevi, mother of the king, instituted a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple.
41.	„	1007	35th*	1311	„	Records the institution of a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple by Tārādevi of the royal family. Mentions Avani Sri pādālu, a religious teacher.

\* niche in the *tiruchuttunala*.

1	2	3	4	5	6
42.	Bhanudeva II	1008	35th*	1311	Telugu
					Records a similar type of grant by Nilādevi, a wife of the king. Mentions the priests of the temple as Ekāki Srivaishṇavulu and the cooks as <i>pappu pāyasam vaṇḍevāru</i> .
43.	-do-	859	18th*	1312	„
					Records the gifts of the king to one Rāga-bhārati to worship the Lord for the king's welfare.
44.	-do-	1055	41st*	1313	„
					Records the fact that an officer of the king arranged for a musical recital in the temple for king's merit.
45.	-do-	1036	38th*	1315	„
					Records the fact that the king made an endowment for the upkeep of an umbrella service in the temple.
46.	-do-	1017	36th*	1316	„
					Records the fact that Uttamādevi, wife of the king, purchased a <i>vṛitti</i> of <i>prasāda</i> from the <i>Śrībhagavāra</i> and made it over to Nara-samma, who is to perform <i>samārūdhana</i> to the Lord.
47.	-do-	1035	38th*	1316	„
					Records the gift of a village (Pinagādi) to the temple by the same lady for a <i>bhoga</i> . The items required for the <i>bhoga</i> have to be supplied from the village.
48.	-do-	1015	36th*	1318	„
					Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by the king.
49.	-do-	1016	36th*	1324	„
					Records the gifts of a commander of the king for the merit of his master.



50.	-do-	1014	36th*	1325	„	Records the gifts of the king to the temple servants.
51.	-do-	731	6th*	1328	„	Records the fact that Pārvatimahādevi, wife of the king, deposited 300 <i>māḍas</i> in the royal treasury, obtained a number of villages in the Kaṭṭagadesa and made them over to the temple for the conduct of a <i>bhoga</i> . The inscription describes the various items offered as <i>bhoga</i> .
52.	-do-	1115	48th*	1336	„	Records the gift of a garland to the temple by Rājulāmahādevi, a wife of the king.
53.	-do-	1113	48th*	1336	„	Records a similar type of gift by Kamalādevi of the royal household.
54.	-do-	707	1st*	1338	„	Registers an endowment for the Viñjamaraseva by a king's officer.
55.	-do-	1040	39th*	1339	„	Records the fact that an officer of the king instituted a <i>bhoga</i> in the name of the king and for his own merit. To meet the charges he made over two villages (Kaniti and Manduka) to the temple.
56.	-do-	1069	42nd*	1344	„	Registers the gift of silver vessels to the temple by queen Tallamādevi.
57.	-do-	720	3rd*	R. Year 8	Oriya	The institution of Nissanka Bhānubhoga by an officer of the king. The inscription is in Oriya.
58.	-do-	808	13th*	1349	Telugu	Records an endowment for an <i>akhaḍḍadīpa</i> by the king.

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\* niche in the *tiruchurumāla*

1	2	3	4	5	6
59.	Bhānudeva VI	1082	43rd*	1349	Telugu Registers the gift of two umbrellas to the temple by a queen.
60.	„	784	11th*	1352	„ Registers an endowment for the <i>Viñjāmarā</i> <i>Seva</i> by a queen.
<b>Matsyas of Oddadi</b>					
1.	Arjunadeva I	1143	56**	1191	„ Records a gift of 75 sheep for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp by the king.
2.	„	712	2nd*	1196	„ Records endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> by Śrikumarā Anantajīyana described as Matsyakulatilaka, also described as Gangavamśa-nidrohahavalamāyḍalika. Mentions the items offered to the Lord at the time of <i>dhūpa</i> , <i>naivedya</i> and <i>baliarchana</i> .
3.	„	1139	53rd**	1203	„ Records the fact that Śrirangapeggada, a minister of the king made an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .
4.	„	995	3rd*	1205	„ Mentions for an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a minister of Oddādī.
5.	„	1138	52nd*	1208	„ Records similar type of gift by Annamarāju, brother of Arjunadeva described as Narasimhavaradhana.
6.	„	975	31st*	1210	„ Records gifts of lands to the temple for raising gardens. Mentions the gardener by designation as ' <i>toṭaparīksha</i> '.
7.	„	937	26th*	1214	„ Incomplete. Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .

8.	Jayanta	943	27th*	1214	„	Important inscription. Records the gift of a flower garden by the king to the temple at the instance of Naraharitirtha.
9.	„	976	31st*	1220	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by the king.
10.	„	981	31st*	1259	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by the king and several other gifts.
11.	„	867	19th*	1261	„	A gift of 100 cows by the king for his own merit for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .
12.	„	942	27th*	1268	„	The same type of gift by Chinnādevi a wife of the king.
13.	„	979	31st*	1270	„	Records an endowment for the daily supply of a <i>tirumala</i> to the Lord by queen Bhimādevi.
14.	„	980	31st*	1270	„	Mutilated. Seems to record gifts by Bhimādevi.
15.	„	968	38th*	1271	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by the queen.
16.	Arjunadeva II	974	38th*	1279	„	Registers an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a queen.
17.	„	877	19th*	1286	„	An endowment for a <i>tirutomāla</i> by the king.
18.	„	875	19th*	1291	„	An endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> consisting of milk by the king.
19.	„	876	19th*	1299	„	Same type of gift by the king. Mentions the functionaries of the temple: <i>bhoga parīksha</i> , <i>nambyāru</i> and <i>parichārakulu</i> .

\* niche in the *tiruchuṇṇimālā*\*\* pillar in the *tiruchuṇṇimālā*

	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	Arjunadeva III	789	21st*	1303	Telugu	Records the institution of a <i>bhoga</i> called Arjunabhoga in the temple by the king.
21.	"	872	19th*	1321	"	An endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> by a sister of the king.
22.	"	946	27th*	1330	"	Records several types of gifts by the king. These were meant for the decoration of the Lord.
23.	"	829	15th*	1334	"	An endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> by the king.
24.	"	1076	40th*	1338	"	An endowment for an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by a daughter of the king.
25.	"	825	15th*	1338	"	A similar type of gift by a queen.
26.	"	830	15th*	1342	"	Records the gift of a badge by the king. The word ' <i>Budavarana</i> ' occurring in the inscription shows both the shortening of the vowel and absence of breathing.
27.	"	836	16th*	1343	"	Records a gift of several ornaments by the king. These were to be utilised in the conduct of various services to the Lord.
28.	"	966	30th*	1343	"	Records the gift of the king on the occasion of his conquest of Jantarunādu.
29.	Arjunadeva IV	727	4th**	1387	"	Records the institution of Amṛtamani-bhoga. This has to be offered to the Lord in the day time. The ingredients are: pulses, rice, vegetables, rice-cakes and the like.

## Silavamsa Kings of Nandapura

1.	Viswanadha Rāju	891	21st*	1275	Telugu	Records an endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by the king.
2.	Bhairavarāju	883	20th*	1292	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by queen mother Akkamādevi.
3.	Bayyarāju	1065	42nd*	1318	„	A gift of badge made of gold and lampstead by the king.
4.	Pratapa Gangarāja	950	28th*	1349	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhanādipa</i> . Mentions the matrimonial alliance between the Matsyas of Oddādi and the Śilāvamsa kings of Nandāpura.
5.	„	950	28th*	1349	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by queen mother.
6.	Peda Ella	1191	†	1486	„	A gift of images to the temple by the king.

## Chalukyas of Elamanchi

1.	Lakshmideva	692	‡	1188	Telugu	Records the endowments for two <i>akhandadipas</i> and for a <i>naivedya</i> in the temple by the king.
2.	Mallapa	934	26th**	1205	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by the king along with his queen and his son Upendra.
3.	Upendra II	910	24th*	1278	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by the king.

† On a pillar in *mukhamandapa*.‡ At the entrance of *kalyanamandapa*.\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.



1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Upendra II	921	24th*	1294	Telugu	Records that Chennesvaradevi the queen mother made an endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> for the merit of her son Upendra.
5. Visveswara	840	16th*	1299	„	Records an endowment for the daily supply of a <i>tirumala</i> to the Lord by the king described as Chaturthānvaya Sindhu Sitakirana.
6. „	916	24th*	1310	„	Records a gift of land for a garland to the Lord by the queen and her daughter. Mentions Kesava Bhārati, a religious savant.
7. Choḍaganga	705	1st*	1313	„	An endowment for the conduct of services in the temple by the king. Mentions that the functionaries were granted wet land ( <i>Jalakshetramu</i> ).
8. Visvesvara	919	24th*	1323	„	Records a gift of 20 <i>tankas</i> to the <i>Śrī Bhandāra</i> of the temple for a flag-post necessary for the conduct of Lord's festivals.
9. Jaleśvara	1004	34th*	1301	„	Records an endowment for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> in the temple by the king described as sarvalokāśraya chakravarti.
10. Bhimarāja	755	8th*	1302	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by one Dharmadāsajiyana.

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\* niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

11.	Nallurāju	1125	50th*	1307	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by the king described as Kalingamajji.
12.	Sarvarāja	698	2nd**	1447	„	A gift of a village to the temple by the king described as Beharāmahāpatra.

#### Surabhis of Jantarunadu

1.	Gangarāja	713	2nd*	1207	„	An endowment for the daily supply of <i>pushpa māla</i> to the temple by the king. Mentions that the king purchased some land for the temple for this purpose. Describes the gardeners as <i>tonta dāsarulu</i> .
2.	Pratāpa Gangarāja	714	2nd*	1241	„	Records that queen Lakshmidēvi made an endowment for <i>akhandadīpa</i> in the temple. Mentions the 13th regnal year of Devādideva Jagannātha Devara.
3.	Pratāpa Gangarāja	715	2nd*	1258	„	Records a similar type of gift by queen mother. The record mentions <i>mānika</i> and <i>kuncha</i> as measures used.
4.	Purushottama	795	11th*	1278	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by queen Madanarekha.
5.	Purushottama	725	3rd**	1290	„	Records an endowment for the upkeep of an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by the chief. In the Sanskrit verse with which the inscription starts the king is extolled as a patron of learning and music.
6.	Virasingarāja	1097	44th*	1300	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhandadīpa</i> by his queen.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Virasingarāja	1095	44th*	1303	Telugu
8.	Saṅgamarāja	723	3rd**	1320	„
9.	Saṅgamarāja	724	3rd**	1321	„
10.	Pratāpa Gangarāja	1011	36th*	1342	„
11.	Pratāpa gangarāja	1010	36th*	1343	„
12.	Poturāju	913	24th*	1370	„
13.	Pratāpachinga Rāja	925	24th*	1383	„
14.	Pratāpakūrma Rāja	1054	41st*	1383	„

#### Pallavas of Virakutam

1.	Bayyarāju	1203	On the wall of <i>asthānamandapa</i>	1148	„
2.	Purushottama I	992	33rd*	1230	„
3.	Purushottama I	938	26th*	1236	„

Records further gifts by the same queen.  
 Records an endowment for an *akhandadipa* by his queen.  
 Records that the king made an endowment for the supply of milk on Vaiśakhatriya. The *khilaris* who maintained the endowment were given land in Alamanda.  
 Records an endowment for an *akhandadipa* by the king.  
 Endowment for *Vinjamaraseva* by the king.  
 Registers an endowment for umbrella service in the temple by the king.  
 A gift of land for services in the temple by the king.  
 An endowment for a *bhoga* by the king.

Records a gift of land by the queen. For the maintenance of a festival. The inscription shows that the boundaries of lands donated to the temple were demarcated.  
 An endowment for *akhandadipa* and a *tirutomāla* by the king.  
 Records that an officer of the king gifted a flower garden to the temple.

4.	Lakkumarāju	989	32nd*	1268	„	Records a gift for <i>akhanḍadīpa</i> .
5.	Narasimha	988	32nd*	1270	„	Records a similar type of gift.
6.	PurushottamaII	994	33rd*	1274	„	Records a gift of 50 cows for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp in the temple by the king.
7.	„	795	11th*	1278	„	Records that Madanarekha a queen placed an endowment for an <i>akhanḍadīpa</i> .
8.	Narasimha	963	29th*	1279	„	An endowment for an <i>akhanḍadīpa</i> by a queen.
9.	Saubhagya-rāja	961	29th*	1322	„	Records an endowment for an <i>akhanḍadīpa</i> .
10.	„	1101	44th*	1342	„	An endowment for several services in the temple.
<b>Koppula Chiefs</b>						
1.	Kāpayanā-yunḍu	821	14th*	1282	„	Records that the chief made an endowment for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp in the temple.
2.	„	822	14th*	1282	„	Damaged. Gives the <i>prāśasti</i> of the Koppula chiefs. Suggests that Kāpayanāyaka was the Lord of Guḷravāti Vishaya.
3.	Koppulaya	833	14th*	1310	„	Records a gift of 5 villages for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple made by the chief.
4.	Nāmayanā-yunḍu	924	24th*	1291	„	Records a gift of 100 cows for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp and a piece of land for <i>Boyas</i> .

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Chiefs of Korukonda</b>					
1. Mummaḍi-nāyaka	841	16th*	1286	Telugu	Important Inscription. Mentions that the chief was a pupil of Kaudāda Ayyangar. Refers to a flower garden situated south of Bhairavapura (Bhairava Dvāra). 'Mangipariki Mummadi Nāyaka' is incorrect. It should read Mangipundi. This inscription gives testimony to the devotion of the chief to Lord Simhādri-nātha. He visited the temple with his wife and brother and instituted a <i>nibandhana</i> for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord.
2. "	1084	43rd*	1304	"	Records the information that the king instituted various services ( <i>Kolupulu</i> ) to the Lord.
3. "	1090	44th*	1310	"	
<b>Suryavamsi Gajapatis of Orissa</b>					
1. Kapileśvara	1089	44th***	18th	Oriya	Records that an officer of the king instituted a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple.
2. "	1155	†	22nd	vichchi	Mutilated and incomplete.
3. "	1152	†	anka	"	
4. "	1151	†	25th	anka	Records the institution of <i>bhoga</i> for the merit of the king.
			28th	anka	Registers the gifts of an officer of the king.



5.	„	793	12th**	32nd anka	Telugu	Records an endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> .
6.	„	1150	††	33rd anka	Oriya	A similar type of endowment.
7.	„	1153	††	38th anka	„	The same type of gift by an officer of the king.
8.	„	1157	††	33rd anka	„	An endowment for a service in the temple.
9.	„	1158	††	33rd anka	„	Damaged.
10.	Purushottama	703	3rd**	2nd anka	„	Oriya copy of No. 699. Records the installation of Hanumanta and an endowment for his <i>bhoga</i> .
11.	„	1160	‡‡	3rd anka	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by an officer of the king.
12.	„	895	21st**	8th anka	„	Records an endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> .
13.	„	844	17th**	1364	Telugu	Records that the king made over to the temple the customs duties (300 tankas) which the state used to get from the mountain range near the temple. Mentions <i>Tiruchuṭṭumāli Devullu</i> (icons carved on pillars of <i>tiruchuṭṭumāla</i> ).

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.\*\* On a pillar in the *tiruchuṭṭumala*.† On the west wall of the *maṇḍapa* in front of Ālvar shrine.‡ On a round pillar in the *maṇḍapa* in front of Ālvar shrine.†† South wall of the *maṇḍapa* in front of Ālvar shrine.‡‡ On a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* in front of Ālvar shrine.

1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Purushottama	805	13th**	1364	Telugu
					An endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by an officer of the king. Mentions the <i>Mūla-virāt</i> as 'Simhādri Appa'.
15.	"	903	22nd**	17th śrāhi	Oriya
16.	"	1159	@	18th śrāhi	"
17.	"	908	23rd**	28th śrāhi	"
18.	"	1163	@	31st śrāhi	"
19.	"	1162	@	38th śrāhi	"
20.	Hamvira	1088	44th**	1381	Telugu
					Records that the king made a provision for playing on a musical instrument in the temple. This has to be performed by a Sāni at the time of <i>Avakāśa Samaya</i> of the morning.
21.	Pratāparudra	1164	@	8th śrāhi	Oriya
22.	"	1149	†	34th śrāhi	"
					Records an endowment for a service in the temple.

#### Miscellaneous Dynasties

1.	Anavemā Redḍi	785	11th*	1297	Telugu
					Records that Channamanāyūṇḍu son of Nārāyanadasa a minister of the king gave a field (6 <i>putṭis</i> of land) to the temple

(31)	2. Kumaragiri Reḍḍi	781	11th*	1308	for the support of 7 Brahmins. Records an endowment for the daily supply of a garland to the Lord by Kaṭaya Vema. The word Pradani (pradhāni) shows no breathing. The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
	3. Anavota (Recherla)	1081	43rd*	1302	Records that Queen Kanakalakshmi made an endowment for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp.
	4. Vedagiri (Recherla)	1100	44th*	1329	Records that Pina Udayanāyundu, a relative of the king, made an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> .
	5. Telugu Rāya (Vijayanagar)	905	23rd*	1350	Records the endowment for two <i>akhaṇḍadipas</i> , by Telugurāya, an officer of Devaraya II of Vijayanagar. Registers a grant of cows and land in Oḍḍadidesa to the Boyas who are required to maintain the endowment. The cyclic year is incorrect. Instead of <i>plavanga</i> it should be <i>kilaka</i> .
	6. Vemā Reḍḍi (Rājamahendra Rājya)	1168	‡	1356	Records that the chief undertook to continue the status of lands given to Brahmins.
	7. Virabhadra	1167	‡	—	Records the information that the chief

\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.

@ On a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* near Ālvār shrine.

† On the wall of *asthanamaṇḍapa*.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

‡ On the door post of the north entrance to Ālvār shrine.

1	2	3	4	5	6
(Rājamahendra Rājya)					
8.	Krishnarāya (Vijayanagar)	694 †	1438	Telugu	gifted a necklace to the Lord.
9.	"	1117 †	1438	"	Records gifts of the king for the merit of his father and mother. The gifts include a garland of emeralds and diamonds and a necklace.
10.	"	696 1st**	1438	"	Records a similar type of gift. Copy of No. 694.
11.	"	695 †	1441	"	Records a gift of several villages by the king to the temple. These villages are stated to have been acquired from Pratāparudra.
12.	Govinda (Gajapati)	748 8th**	3rd anka	Oriya	An endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> .
13.	"	749 8th**	8th anka	"	Registers similar type of gift.
14.	"	778 11th**	4th śrāhi	"	The gift of a flower garden to the temple.
15.	"	927 24th**	5th śrāhi	"	Registers an endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple.
16.	Mukunḍa	1146 † †	11th anka	"	Damaged and incomplete.
17.	"	1148 † †	11th anka	"	Damaged and incomplete.
18.	Muhammad Kuli Kutub-shahi	1184 † †	1526	Telugu	Important inscription. Records that one Aśvarāyudu at the instance of the king conquered the local chiefs and revived

the worship in the temple which has long been in abeyance.  
Records that the chief of the *Vatsavāya* lineage erected a golden *maṇḍapa* in the temple.

19. Telugurāya 1190 †† 1521 „

## PRIVATE DONATIONS

No. in S.I.I. VI	Location	Date in Śaka era	Characters	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
1.	1173 On a pillar in the**	10(2)6	Telugu 	Records a grant of 14 <i>māḍas</i> for the daily supply of a garland by a merchant from Choḷamandala
2.	1175 Same place	1071	Tamil	Records a similar grant for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a native of Viṣākhapatnam.
3.	1214 On a stone near Gan- gādhāra	1088	„	This record is not to be found now. Damaged. Seems to register the gift of a merchant from Tamilnad.

† On the base of *asthanamaṇḍapa*.

\*\* On a pillar in the *tiruchuṇṇimala*.

† On the wall of *asthanamaṇḍapa*.

†† On a pillar in the front of *mukhamamaṇḍapa*.



1	2	3	4	5
4. —	On the outer walls of the <i>antarāla</i>	1097	Telugu	Unpublished. Records the gift of a measure of ghee to the Lord by a daughter of a <i>dāsari</i> for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> .
5. 1189	On the northern entrance to <i>āsthānamandapa</i>	1106	,,	Damaged. Seems to record the gift of a piece of land.
6. 1166	On the east wall of <i>kalyanamandapa</i>	1120	,,	Records a similar gift by one Malliśetti of Elamañchi for the upkeep of an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> . He placed 10 <i>tyāgi māḍas</i> for this purpose.
7. 799	12th niche in the*	1122	,,	Mutilated. Records the gift of 30 <i>gādyas</i> .
8. 1178	On the wall of <i>asthana-mandapa</i>	1123	,,	Records the gift of a piece of land for the upkeep of milk service in the temple. This is to be enjoyed by those engaged in teaching Yajurveda.
9. 1193	@	1125	,,	Mutilated. Seems to record a grant of cows for the upkeep of an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> .
10. 1178	@	1125	,,	Registers a gift of 7 <i>Surabhi Gādyas</i> for the upkeep of a perpetual lamp by one Rekama Nayaka described as the ruler of Allānda. The chief might have had connections with the Surabhis of Jan-tarunādu.
11. 1196	†	1128	,,	Mutilated. Seems to record a gift.
12. 1199	@	1129	,,	Registers the grant of a field for an <i>akhaṇḍadipa</i> by one Ballu Pradhāni.
13. 1182	@	1129	,,	Registers a gift of 10 <i>Biraghaṭṭapu gādyas</i> by one Kesava Bhaṭṭa. The inscription

14.	1204	@	1141	„	begins with Sanskrit verse. Records a grant of 10 <i>tankas</i> for an <i>akhandadipa</i> ,
15.	1167	††	1142	„	Mutilated. Registers the grant of a field for the maintenance of <i>bhoga</i> in the temple. Makes a reference to the propitiation of the Lord's image after installing it on <i>āsthānamandapa</i> ( <i>āsthānamukoluva</i> ). Mentions the ingredients of <i>Bhoga</i> : Jaggery, pepper, betle-leaves, areca-nuts, etc.
16.	1183	@	1143	„	Records a similar type of gift.
17.	1194	†	1143	„	Mutilated. Records a donation like the previous one.
18.	952	28th*	1155	„	Registers the information that one Yerrujiyana made a number of donations for his own merit on the Āshāḍa Pournami day.
19.	1186	@	1159	„	Damaged. Registers a donation for the maintenance of a <i>bhoga</i> .
20.	1198	‡	1164	„	Damaged. Seems to register an endowment for the conduct of a festival. Mentions Grāmapradakshina (taking the image of the Lord around the village)

\* On the niche in the *tiruchuṇṇimala*.

@ On the wall of *asthanamandapa*.

† On the *bhogamandapa*.

†† On the wall of *kalyanamandapa*.

‡ On a beam of the store-room.

1	2	3	4	5
21.	1195		Telugu	Damaged. Donative like the above.
22.	1176	@	"	Registers a gift of a flower garden to the temple.
23.	1208	@	"	Incomplete. A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
24.	693	†	"	Registers a gift of 12 <i>gandamādas</i> to the temple treasury by a minister of Narasimha I.
25.	704	1st**	"	Gift of sheep for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a <i>śeṭṭi</i> (trader)
26.	726	4th**	"	Registers a similar type of gift on Dipāvali.
27.	728	6th**	"	Registers an endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Dimile.
28.	845	17th*	"	Registers a grant of villages to the temple by one Purushottama Pradhāni. These were meant to be utilized for the maintenance of various temple servants.
29.	912	24th*	"	Registers a gift of 12 <i>mādas</i> for the maintenance of a flower garden in Adivaramu. Important inscription. Mentions the place at the foot of the hill as Adivaramu.
30.	936	28th*	"	An endowment for fan-service to the Lord by one Vāsudevapadīrayalu. He placed 32 <i>chinnālu</i> in the <i>sribhandāra</i> .
31.	1139	53rd*	"	Endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by one Śrīranga Peggada of Oddādi.
32.	947	28th**	"	Records a gift of 12 <i>Gaṇḍamādas</i> by a

33.	885	21st*	1208	person described, as Uttamasīṅgāra Pariksha. Mentions Gangādhāra, the Lords tirthavāri (bathing ghat). A gift of 6 <i>māḍas</i> and 3 <i>chinnas</i> to the <i>śribhandāra</i> for the upkeep of an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> in the temple.
34.	949	28th*	1208	“ A endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> on Kārtika Śukla Pañchami.
35.	896	22nd*	1209	“ Registers the endowments made by one Purushottama nāyaka on the Śrijayanti day of the Lord; (1) Two <i>gaṇḍamādas</i> for a <i>bhoga</i> on the day (2) One <i>gaṇḍamāda</i> for the daily supply of a flower garden. The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
36.	995	23rd*	1209	“ Donative. An endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a minister of Oddadi
37.	886	21st*	1211	“ Records a gift of 12 <i>gaṇḍamādas</i> for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .
38.	1137	51st**	1212	“ Records that one Dāsapandita instituted <i>nibhandanas</i> for Sānisāmpradāya.
39.	965	30th*	1213	“ Important inscription. Registers the endowment for a perpetual lamp by Nara-haritirtha.
40.	824	14th*	1218	“ Registers a gift of 50 sheep for an <i>akhaṇḍa-</i>

@ On the wall of *asthanamanḍapa*.

‡ On the wall of *kalyanamandapa*.

\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

5				
1	2	3	4	dipa by one Bhimi Setti of Vendurti grāma (Pendurti).
41.	868	1218	Telugu	Records the fact that one Peddināyaka placed 2 <i>archamādas</i> for the maintenance of <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord. Provision was also made for the servants who removed vegetation on the Vimāna.
42.	706	1220	"	Registers the information that a similar type of gift for a <i>bhoga</i> on Kumāra Punnami by one Jiharināyaka. The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
43.	897	1220	"	An endowment for the daily supply of flowers <i>tirumālaseva</i> to the Lord. The inscription begins in Sanskrit.
44.	948	1220	"	Records a gift of 10 <i>ganḍamādas</i> for the festivals connected with Gangādhāra.
45.	967	1226	"	Records the fact that one Pāndyani made an endowment for <i>akhandadipa</i> .
46.	969	1226	"	Records the information that one Nambināyakundu placed 3 <i>ganḍamādas</i> in the temple <i>bhandāra</i> to be utilised for the <i>bhoga</i> on a festival day ( <i>Tirunāllu</i> ).
47.	747	1227	"	A donation for a <i>akhandadipa</i> by Akhandānanda Śrīpādālu for the merit of his teacher, Varadagiri Śrīpādālu.
48.	998	1246	"	A similar type of endowment by a person hailing from Viraghattam.



49.	1001	34th*	1249	„	A donation for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .
50.	956	28th*	1255	„	An endowment for the daily supply of a garland to the temple.
51.	939	26th*	1259	„	Records many endowments made by an officer described as Kalingapariksha.
52.	953	28th*	1260	„	Registers an endowment for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> .
53.	978	31st*	1260	„	Registers an endowment for the <i>tirumāla</i> made on Āshāda Pournami.
54.	917	24th*	1262	„	Registers a gift of 12 <i>mādas</i> for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a <i>Kalinga Pariksha</i> .
55.	977	31st*	1262	„	A donation for <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord on Āshāda Purnami.
56.	983	32nd*	1264	„	Registers the many gifts made by one Kōmidevi on Vaiṣākha Śukla Tṛtiya. These are: a necklace made of gold, a necklace of jewels, and two lamp-stands.
57.	993	33rd*	1265	„	An endowment for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
58.	996	33rd*	1265	„	Registers an endowment for a <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> and a gift of a jewel to the Lord by a private citizen.
59.	900	22nd*	1266	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord. For this purpose, he deposited 9 <i>gaṇḍamādas</i> , obtained two <i>nibhandhas</i> of <i>prasāda</i> and made them over to a <i>Senāpati</i> .

\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

	1	2	3	4	5
60.	991	33rd*	1268	Telugu	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Viraghattam.
61.	716	2nd*	1269	"	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
62.	899	22nd*	1269	"	Incomplete. Seems to record gifts by a person hailing from Yaradivishaya (Yarada).
63.	997	33rd*	1269	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Pottunūru.
64.	898	22nd*	1271	"	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by a person described as Kalingamajji.
65.	911	24th*	1271	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> on the Pournami of the month of Chaitra.
66.	955	28th*	1271	"	Records the institution on <i>nibhandhanas</i> for Śanisāmpradāya by person hailing from Pottunūru.
67.	962	29th*	1272	"	Endowment for the recital of <i>Purusha Sūktas</i> in the temple. This recital was to be performed at the time of the sacred bath of the Lord.
68.	906	23rd*	1274	"	Registers an endowment for a <i>tirumāla</i> by one Mankusenāpati.
69.	956	28th*	1255	"	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
70.	894	21st*	1278	"	Records that Narasimhabhārati Śrīpādālu placed 21 <i>mādas</i> and received 4 <i>vittis</i> of <i>prasāda</i> .
71.	893	21st*	1278	"	Records a gift of cash ( <i>mādas</i> ) to the temple treasury.

72.	1032	38th*	1278	„	Records the gifts of one Kuchama for the daily supply of Naivedya ( <i>Naivedyārdham</i> ). Mentions Vaikunṭha Nātha. The inscription begins with Sanskrit verse.
73.	1131	50th*	1278	„	Registers the information that an officer called Jogi Senāpati made a gift of 8 <i>mādas</i> to one Śrīrāma Nāyudu. The latter is required to supply flowers to the temple.
74.	984	32nd*	1279	„	A donation for daily supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
75.	1132	50th*	1279	„	Declaration. Mentions that one Śrīrāma Senāpati made over to the temple a field of land in Velanādu.
76.	833	15th*	1280	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple one Koma Jiyar described as Mahāmuni.
77.	892	21st*	1280	„	Declaratory. Records the information that the fields situated at Kasimkora and Vaddādi belonging to Narasimhabhārati have to be enjoyed by his disciples. The disciples were enjoined to look after the <i>matha</i> .
78.	1028	37th*	1280	„	A donation for the maintenance of <i>Sānisām-pradāya</i> in the temple.
79.	973	30th*	1281	„	A donation for the daily supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by one Bhimana Pregada.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5
80.	1005	34th*	1281	Telugu A similar type of endowment by one Bhimana of Oddādi. Also records a gift of silver vessels to the temple.
81.	1047	40th*	1281	Important. Records the transfer of employment ( <i>Kolupu</i> ) from Ammani to Ganga by Narasimhabhārati Śrīpādālu. The inscription mentions the powers of the <i>Bhogapariksha</i> , the highest dignitary of the temple.
82.	802	12th*	1281	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person described as ' <i>kalinga pariksha</i> '.
83.	889	21st*	1281	An endowment for the supply of two <i>yajñopavitas</i> to the temple by Narasimha Bhārati on Krishnāshtami.
84.	890	29th*	1281	A donation for the maintenance of <i>Sānis</i> by Narasimha Bhārati Śrīpādālu, a religious savant. Describes the duties of <i>Sānis</i> .
85.	964	29th*	1281	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by one Karri Jiyaana, described as a person belonging to Matsyakula.
86.	761	9th*	1282	Records a gift of 12 mādas for <i>akhandadipa</i> and 15 mādas for <i>bhoga</i> to Yajñavarāha of the temple by one Kalinga Pariksha. Shows that the <i>pārśva devatas</i> received worship.
87.	798	12th*	1282	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person of Bobbili.

88.	1107	40th*	1282	„	An endowment for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person on Āshāda Punnami.
89.	987	32nd*	1282	„	Mutilated. Seems to record an endowment by a private person.
90.	1102	45th*	1282	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> on Āshāda Punnami.
91.	860	18th*	1243	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by Narasimha Bhārati Śrīpādālu.
92.	1064	41st*	1283	„	Damaged. Donation for <i>chāmara seva</i> by a Kalinga Pariksha.
93.	858	18th*	1284	„	Records that one Vājapeyulu of Odyā Desa made an endowment for the enjoyment of Narasimha Bhārati, a religious savant.
94.	762	9th*	1285	„	A donation for the <i>bhoga</i> to Varāhaswāmi.
95.	791	11th*	1285	„	A donation for the supply of honey to the Lord on Akshayartiya.
96.	754	8th*	1286	„	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> on Chaitra Bahula Ekādāśi.
97.	775	9th*	1286	„	Mutilated. Seems to record a donation for a <i>bhoga</i> .
98.	834	15th*	1286	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person from Virakūtam.
99.	841	16th*	1286	„	A donation for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> . Mentions Bhairavapura.
100.	842	16th*	1286	„	Registers the gift of a gold necklace studded with gems by Bhimana Peggada of

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.



5				
1	2	3	4	
				Vaddādi.
101.	843	1286	Telugu	A donation for <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by Bhimana Peggada of Vaddādi.
102.	839	1287	"	Registers further gifts by Bhimana. Mentions the recital of Narasimha Kavācha and Sahasranāma in the temple.
103.	882	1287	"	Registers the information that the same person, Bhimana Peggada placed 60 <i>gandamādas</i> and instituted two special services to the Lord.
104.	813	1288	"	A donation for <i>chāmara</i> seva to the Lord by one Kalinga Pariksha.
105.	832	1288	"	A donation for <i>akhandadipa</i> in the temple by one Bhimana, son of Bhimana Peggada of Oddādi.
106.	746	1289	"	A donation for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
107.	814	1289	"	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord at the time of <i>Tirumajjana</i> by one Gangādhara Jiyana.
108.	815	1289	"	A donation for the conduct of the <i>chāmara</i> seva to the Lord. Mentions <i>chinnālu</i> .
109.	816	1289	"	Records a donation for the <i>chāmara</i> seva to be performed on festivals of the Lord when he is taken round the village.
110.	1068	1290	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by one Pariksha.

111.	740	6th*	1291	„	A donation for the maintenance of a <i>Sāni</i> who was required to perform Viñjāmaraseva. Mentions <i>gandamādas</i> .
112.	742	6th*	1294	„	A donation for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by an officer. He made provision for one <i>nibandhana</i> of <i>prasāda</i> for the Nāyaka who supplied the flowers to the Lord.
113.	1110	47th*	1294	„	A gift of an umbrella to the Lord for the utilization in the festivals of the month ( <i>māsotsva</i> ).
114.	819	13th*	1295	„	A similar type of gift by Kalinga <i>vyāpāri</i> .
115.	811	13th*	1294	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> . Mentions Santānagopāla.
116.	1060	41st*	1294	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord.
117.	1025	37th*	1295	„	Registers gifts by Jagannādhā Tirtha of Narahari Maṭha. Important inscription. Shows the continued existence of the <i>maṭha</i> .
118.	1075	42nd*	1296	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> .
119.	1122	49th*	1296	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Poṭṭūru Vidu.
120.	1130	50th*	1296	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by Viśwanātha, a son of Kalinga <i>Pariksha</i> . This has to be performed by Sānis.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

	1	2	3	4	5
121.	1134	50th*	1296	Telugu	A donation for the support of <i>sankirtana</i> , devotional chanting. This has to be performed by Sānis.
122.	1136	50th*	1296	„	Registers the gift of 40 <i>gandamādas</i> by a <i>Kalinga Pariksha</i> . Refers to the white-washing of the temple.
123.	794	12th**	1297	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person of Oddādi.
124.	797	12th*	1297	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by Varadana Praggada of Oddādi. This has to be performed by four Sānis.
125.	873	19th*	1297	„	A donation for Sānis of the temple for performing the fan-service.
126.	881	20th*	1297	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
127.	901	22nd*	1297	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
128.	759	9th*	1298	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to Varāhadeva of Simhagiri.
129.	811	13th*	1298	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by Mallisetti of Potnūruvidu.
130.	1114	48th*	1298	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
131.	1116	48th*	1298	„	A donation for the maintenance of several temple servants: <i>Nāyakas</i> who bore the torches, <i>Parichārakas</i> who carried water and <i>Sānis</i> who sang in the presence of the Lord.
132.	1123	49th*	1298	„	Records the fact that a person hailing

from Potnūru deposited 5 *gandamādas* in the temple *Bhandāra* and made over a *vṛtti* of *prasāda* to one Chingu Nāyaka for the daily supply of flowers to the temple.

133.	1128	50th*	1298	„	A donation for conducting temple service by a <i>Kalinga Pariksha</i> .
134.	780	11th*	1299	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> by a person well-versed in Veda and other disciplines.
135.	800	12th*	1299	„	A similar type of gift by Varadana Peggada of Oddādi.
136.	803	12th*	1299	„	A similar type of gift by Maheśvara of Potnūru.
137.	1111	47th*	1299	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> and a <i>tirumāla</i> by one Kalingamajji.
138.	1126	50th*	1299	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord by one Dharmadāsa Jiyana. He placed 20 <i>gandamādas</i> in the <i>Bhandāra</i> . Refers the <i>archakas</i> as Ekāki Srivaishavulu.
139.	851	17th*	1300	„	A donation for a <i>chāmaraseva</i> by Kumāraguru of Vāranāsi Kataka.
140.	902	22nd*	1300	„	Registers the fact that one Kalinga majji deposited 19 <i>gandamādas</i> in the <i>bhandāra</i> and made the <i>prasada</i> over to 4 Nambis to perform fan-service.
141.	838	16th*	1300	„	A donation for the supply of water to the Holy Bath of the Lord.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

	1	2	3	4	5
142.	922	24th*	1300	Telugu	A donation for different services like <i>chāmara</i> , <i>viñjāmara</i> and <i>tirutomāla</i> to the Lord.
143.	923	24th*	1300	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> in the evening service to the Lord.
144.	1117	48th*	1300	„	A donation for an umbrella service to the Lord.
145.	1121	49th*	1300	„	A donation for a <i>tirutomāla</i> on Vaisākha Śukla Tṛtiya by a person hailing from Potnūru.
146.	732	6th*	1301	„	Mutilated. Donation for the <i>chāmara seva</i> to the Lord.
147.	733	6th*	1301	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> by one Kalingamajji.
148.	734	6th*	1301	„	A similar type of donation.
149.	736	6th*	1302	„	Mutilated. Donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> .
150.	757	8th*	1302	„	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
151.	764	9th*	1302	„	A donation for <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord. This has to be performed by the <i>Sānis</i> .
152.	773	9th*	1302	„	A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
153.	774	9th*	1302	„	A donation for <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Vāranāsi Kataka.
154.	1030	38th*	1302	„	A donation for an <i>akandadipa</i> .
155.	738	6th*	1303	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord.
156.	739	6th*	1303	„	A donation for an umbrella service by



157.	750	8th*	1303	”	Śankarajīyana, a Kalinga pariksha or Vaiśāka Śukla Trītiya.
158.	809	13th*	1303	”	A donation for a <i>Tulasimāla</i> by a person from Potnūrividu.
159.	918	24th*	1303	”	A donation for a <i>Tulasimāla</i> by a person from Potnūru.
160.	818	13th*	1304	”	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Vārāṇasī Kāṭaka.
161.	853	17th*	1304	”	Registers the gift of a <i>Viñjāmara</i> . Mentions the division of <i>Sānis</i> into groups each headed by a leader.
162.	856	17th*	1304	”	A donation for the supply of a <i>māla</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Vārāṇasī Kāṭaka. Begins with a Sanskrit verse.
163.	862	18th*	1304	”	A donation for the supply of a <i>Tirumāla</i> and the <i>chāmara seva</i> to the Lord. Begins with a Sanskrit verse.
164.	1087	43rd*	1304	”	A donation for bringing water to the Holy Bath of the Lord.
165.	756	8th*	1305	”	A donation for a <i>Vanamāla</i> by Narasimha Senāpati described as Potnūrivitiman-dala Karanam.
166.	758	8th*	1305	”	The date is <i>incorrectly</i> given as 1035; donation for the <i>chāmara seva</i> to the Lord.
				”	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a Kalinga Pariksha.

\* Niche in the *niruchuttimāla*.

	1	2	3	4	5
167.	807	13th*	1305	Telugu	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> in the Temple.
168.	820	14th*	1305	„	A donation for <i>tirutomāla</i> by Satyamahādevi of Jantar Nuādu.
169.	972	30th*	1305	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> . Describes the Mūlavirāt as Simhādri Apparu. Mentions Govāda situated near Chodavaram. The <i>boya</i> who is required to maintain the endowment is described as a person belonging to the <i>golla</i> community.
170.	1096	44th*	1305	„	A donation for one Peddibhotlu for training all the brahmins of the <i>kshetra</i> in the recital of Veda.
171.	907	23rd*	1307	„	A donation for <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
172.	776	10th*	1307	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord at the time of the evening service. This consisted of a milk preparation ( <i>pāyasam</i> ).
173.	1077	42nd*	1308	„	A donation for an umbrella service to the Lord.
174.	1080	43rd*	1308	„	A donation for several temple servants engaged in the umbrella and fly-whisk services to the Lord.
175.	923	25th*	1309	„	A donation for <i>Tirumāla</i> .
176.	944	27th*	1309	„	Records a donation for the supply of <i>Tirumāla</i> to the Lord by one Appoju, son of Potoju.
177.	945	27th*	1309	„	A donation for a <i>māla</i> by a person from

178.	1086	43rd*	1309	”	Oddādi. A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by one Chingama Nāyaka.
179.	1119	49th*	1309	”	A donation for a <i>viñjanāra seva</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Vāranāsi Kataka.
180.	1120	49th*	1309	”	Registers similar type of donation.
181.	783	11th*	1310	”	A donation for Tirumāla by a person from Potnuru. The word <i>tamaku</i> shows incorrect lengthening of vowels.
182.	810	13th*	1310	”	Registers donation for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> .
183.	861	18th*	1310	”	A donation for <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by Vāsudeva Bhārati. This endowment was stipulated to be enjoyed by <i>Sānis</i> . Vāsudeva Bhārati is described a pupil of Narasimha Bhārati.
184.	971	30th*	1310	”	A donation for <i>tirumāla</i> by one Kūrma Jiyana of Bobbili. For this purpose he endowed a field of land.
185.	1124	49th*	1310	”	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> . The inscription begins with Sanskrit.
186.	1009	35th*	1311	”	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple. ( <i>prādūt bhogāya</i> ).
187.	722	3rd*	1312	”	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> , <i>chāmaraseva</i> and <i>sankirtana</i> to the Lord by Govindajiyana of Varanasi Kataka. Refers to the singing in Oḍya Sāmpradāya.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5
188.	786	1312	Telugu	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord. Mentions Narava, a place situated near Visakhapatnam.
189.	787	1312	"	A donation of golden vessels on Chaitra śuddha Ekādaśi.
190.	788	1312	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> from a person hailing from Potnūru Vidu.
191.	790	1312	"	A donation for <i>Viñjāmaraseva</i> to the Lord. Mentions Dimile, a place situated in Kaṭinga.
192.	804	1312	"	A donation for the supply of a <i>Tirumāla</i> to the Lord on Kārtikaśuddha Ekādaśi.
193.	805	1313	"	Records the fact that one Viśvanātha Setti of Anavemanagara deposited five <i>tankas</i> of cash in the <i>Śribhandāra</i> and made an endowment for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord. The inscription does not refer to Anavemanagaru situated on the precincts of the Simhāchalam Temple (See M. S. Sarma <i>History of Reddi Kingdoms</i> , page 187) but refers to a person hailing from Anavemanagara.
194.	812	1312	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by one Śrīdhara Senāpati of Potnūru.
195.	768	1313	"	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord.
196.	801	1313	"	A donation for the supply of a <i>māla</i> to the

197.	835	15th*	1313	„	Lord by a person hailing from Vāranāsi Kataka.
198.	847	17th*	1313	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by an officer of the Gāngas. The green-gram needed for the <i>bhoga</i> was to be supplied by one Nara-simha Nāyaka on the receipt of 20 <i>Gaṇ-ḍamāḍās</i> .
199.	1059	41st*	1313	„	A donation for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
200.	750	8th*	1313	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> .
201.	763	9th*	1314	„	A donation by a merchant from Potnūru-vidu (Kaṭinga Vyāpāri) for the daily supply of <i>tulasimala</i> to the Lord.
202.	766	9th*	1314	„	A donation for an umbrella service by one Viḅṇānasāgaraavani Śripāḍalu.
203.	1042	39th*	1314	„	A donation for the <i>tirutomāla</i> . The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
204.	745	6th*	1315	„	Registers similar type of donation by an officer ( <i>senāpati</i> ).
205.	1041	39th*	1315	„	A donation for the supply of <i>tirumajjana-garava</i> and <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
206.	1109	46th*	1315	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by an officer of the Gajapatis ( <i>sandhi-vigrahi</i> ). Registers similar type of donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> . For this purpose Pṛthivī-nāyaka, the donor placed in the temple treasury 4 <i>māḍās</i> and 4 <i>chinnālu</i> .

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.



	1	2	3	4	5
207.	1112	46th*	1315	Telugu	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord. Mentions Kesava Bhārati Śrīpādālu.
208.	765	9th*	1316	„	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord. The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
209.	767	9th*	1316	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
210.	771	9th*	1316	„	Registers similar type of donation for <i>tirumāla</i> .
211.	1037	38th*	1316	„	A donation for the maintenance of a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple.
212.	1135	50th*	1316	„	A Donation for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> and for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> by a person hailing from Vārāṇasī Kataka.
213.	915	24th*	1317	„	A donation for the maintenance of an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> and for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> .
214.	1023	37th*	1317	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a person belonging to Poṭṇūru.
215.	1022	37th*	1318	„	A donation for conducting the recital of Viṣṇu Stotra by a person hailing from Vārāṇasī Kataka.
216.	1033	38th*	1318	„	A donation for the <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> by Arjuna Jiyaṇa, a <i>bhoga pariksha</i> of the temple.
217.	1066	42nd*	1318	„	A donation for the daily supply of a <i>māla</i> .
218.	1067	42nd*	1319	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple.
219.	760	9th*	1320	„	A donation for an <i>akhaṇḍadīpa</i> by a person styled as Kaṭṅga Vyāpāri. Mentions the

(34)	220.	852	17th*	1320	native measures – <i>tūmu</i> , <i>kuñchamu</i> . Registers similar type of donation by a person hailing from Potnūruviḍu.
	221.	869	19th*	1321	A donation for a <i>vanamāla</i> by a person hailing from Oḍḍādi Rājya on Chaitra Suddha Paurṇami.
	222.	870	19th*	1321	Registers similar type of donation on Chaitra Paurṇami by a person hailing from Oḍḍādi Rājya.
	223.	871	19th*	1321	A donation for a <i>chāmara</i> and <i>godugu seva</i> by a minister of Oḍḍādi Rājya.
	224.	1063	41st*	1321	A donation for an <i>akhandāḍipa</i> by a person hailing from Mahendragiri.
	225.	863	18th*	1322	A donation for <i>tirumāla</i> by one Virapota-nāyaka. He purchased a flower garden and made it over to the temple. He also made provision for a lady to supply the <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
	226.	880	20th*	1322	Similar type of donation by a person described as Potnūriviti <i>vyāpāri</i> .
	227.	999	33rd*	1322	A donation for conducting <i>viñjāmara kolupu</i> to the Lord. This has to be performed by <i>Sānis</i> : Ganga Sāni and Samudravijaya Sāni.
	228.	830	16th*	1323	A donation for the supply of <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord.
	229.	1319	37th*	1323	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord.
	230.	1034	38th*	1323	Registers similar type of donation.

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

	1	2	3	4	5
231.	1103	45th*	1323	Telugu	Donation for a <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> on Vaiśākha Tṛitiya.
232.	1073	42nd*	1324	"	Donation for a <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> .
233.	1074	42nd*	1324	"	Donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Poṭṇūruviḍu.
234.	1098	44th*	1324	"	Donation for a <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> by a Kaṇṇa-pariksha.
235.	1071	42nd*	1324	"	Donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
236.	1031	48th*	1324	"	Donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Poṭṇūruviḍu.
237.	1038	39th*	1324	"	Mutilated. Donation for a <i>bhoga</i> . For this purpose a village was placed at the disposal of the temple.
238.	1062	41st*	1324	"	Donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> by a person hailing from Poṭṇūruviḍu.
239.	717	2nd*	1324	"	Donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Poṭṇūruviḍu. The inscription shows that a <i>vṛtti</i> of <i>prasāda</i> (1 <i>kuñcha</i> = 5 <i>gaṇḍa-mādās</i> ).
240.	817	13th*	1325	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> on Akshaya-tṛitiya.
241.	865	18th*	1325	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> , a <i>bhoga</i> and umbrella services on Chitra Sudha

Ekādaśi by one Kūnaparāja. For this purpose he gave to the temple 50 cows, a piece of land in Dimile and several *madās*.

242.	930	25th*	1325	„	A donation for a <i>akhandadipa</i> .
243.	770	9th*	1324	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord.
244.	782	11th*	1326	„	A donation for a <i>tirutomāla</i> .
245.	985	32nd*	1326	„	Registers a similar type of donation. The inscription begins with a sanskrit verse.
246.	986	32nd*	1326	„	A donation for <i>viñjāmarakolupu</i> .
247.	1045	39th*	1327	„	A donation for <i>akhandadipa</i> and also for the supply of <i>tirumāla</i> by a person hailing from Oddādividu.
248.	958	28th*	1328	„	A donation for <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> and other <i>kolupulu</i> by a person hailing from Vārānāsi Kataka.
249.	960	28th*	1328	„	A donation for various services ( <i>kolupulu</i> ) in the temple by a person hailing from Vārānāsi Kataka.
250.	931	25th*	1328	„	A donation for the <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> to the Lord.
251.	735	6th*	1330	„	Registers a similar type of gift.
252.	879	20th*	1330	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Oddādividu.
253.	884	20th*	1330	„	A donation for various services in the temple.
254.	710	1st*	1331	„	A donation for the <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> to the

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

1	2	3	4	5
				Lord by Kamsyala Devi. She deposited 5 silver <i>tankas</i> in the <i>bhandāra</i> for this purpose.
255.	711	1331	Telugu	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
256.	878	1332	,,	Registers a similar type of donation for <i>akhandadipa</i> .
257.	828	1333	,,	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> by the wife of one Tripurāntaka Agho-rāchārya.
258.	1021	1334	,,	A donation for <i>akhandadipa</i> by Āvulaśetti. He is the son of Devaraśetti, styled as Simhagiri Komati (trader of the <i>kshe-tra</i> ).
259.	848	1335	,,	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> and <i>vanamāla</i> . Refers to the grant of a piece of land in Dimile.
260.	1020	1335	,,	A donation for the <i>viñjāmaraseva</i> to the Lord.
261.	1044	1335	,,	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> to the Lord. The inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse.
262.	1072	1335	,,	A donation for the conduct of several services in the temple.
263.	846	1336	,,	A donation for the <i>chāmarakolupu</i> to the Lord.
264.	849	1336	,,	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Kalingapattanam. The



265.	1043	39th*	1336	„	inscription begins with a Sanskrit verse. A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a person hailing from Vāranāsi Kataka.
266.	1107	47th*	1336	„	A donation for the supply of <i>tulasimāla</i> to the Lord Mentions Bhairavadvāra.
267.	1105	47th*	1336	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord.
268.	1057	41st*	1336	„	A donation for the conduct of services in the temple. The four <i>kolupulu</i> (services) are mentioned: <i>tirumajjana garaya</i> (water for the holy bath), <i>divyakolupu</i> (torch-bearing), <i>Viñjāmarakolupu</i> (fan service) and <i>tirutomala</i> (flower garland.)
269.	827	15th*	1337	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a lady from Oddadi on Akshaya Tṛitiya.
270.	1027	54th*	1337	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
271.	1092	44th*	1337	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by an officer, Hari Rāja Nāyudu.
272.	1094	44th*	1337	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by the same person.
273.	708	1st*	1337	„	A donation for the supply of a <i>tirumāla</i> to the Lord.
274.	709	1st*	1338	„	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a person described as Simhadri Bhogapariksha. Mentions the cooks of the temple. Makes a reference to silver <i>tankās</i> .
275.	792	11th*	1338	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person styled as Behara hailing from Vāranāsi

\* Niche in the *tiruchuṇṇimala*.

1	2	3	4	5
				kataka.
276.	857	1338	Telugu	Registers a similar type of donations.
277.	721	1338	"	A donation for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord by a Kalinga Pariksha. The inscription begins with sanskrit verse.
278.	1024	1338	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a trader ( <i>behara</i> ).
279.	1039	1339	"	Mutilated. Seems to record a donation for supply of a <i>māla</i> to the Lord by an officer of the Gāngas.
280. •	866	1340	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by Visva-nāthajiyana described as the Mahasenāpati of Potnuruvidu.
281.	850	1340	"	Registers a similar type of donation.
282.	1058	1340	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a merchant from Jantarunadu.
283.	1070	1342	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a trader from Potnuru ( <i>potnuru pattana komati</i> ).
284.	855	1342	"	A donation for the <i>vinjamaraseva</i> to the Lord.
285.	1012	1343	"	A donation for the supply of a <i>pushpamāla</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Jantarunādu.
286.	779	1343	"	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> in the temple. Makes reference to a garden at Visakhapattana.
287.	1091	1343	"	A donation for supporting a dance teacher

288.	1048	40th*	1345	in the temple. This teacher is styled as Abhinavabhāratāchārya.
289.	1093	44th*	1345	A donation for a <i>vanamāla</i> by Parasurāma Jiyana, styled as <i>Bhogapariksha</i> . Inscription begins in Oriya.
290.	959	29th*	1346	Mutilated. Registers a similar type of gift.
291.	1013	36th*	1346	A donation for the supply of a <i>dondavanamāla</i> to the Lord.
292.	970	30th*	1346	A donation for the <i>vinjāmaraseva</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Vārānāsi Kataka.
293.	1106	47th*	1346	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> to the Lord by a person hailing from Potnuru.
294.	1108	47th*	1346	A donation for the maintenance of brahmins in the temple.
295.	887	21st*	1347	A donation for an umbrella service to the Lord by an officer on Viśākha Tritiya.
296.	798	12th*	1347	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person from Potnuru. Makes a reference to the person who measures articles ( <i>Devара-bhandāramuna Kolechevādu</i> ).
297.	708	1st*	1348	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Bobbili. Mentions Allāda Tankalu. Shows the conquest of the area by Allāda Reddi of Rājamahendrarājya.
298.	1079	43rd*	1348	A donation for conducting musical recital in the temple.
				A donation for the <i>chāmarakolupu</i> to the

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

	1	2	3	4	5
299.	1083	43rd*	1348	Telugu	Lord by Rāmadāsa Jiyana, described as Kalinga Dandapātu Pariksha.
300.	743	6th*	1350	"	Registers a similar type of donation for <i>chāmarakolupu</i> by an officer.
301.	1085	43rd*	1350	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person hailing from Poṭṇuru.
302.	888	43rd*	1352	"	A donation for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord by a Kalinga Behara.
303.	796	11th*	1352	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
				"	A donation for the supply of a <i>vanamāla</i> to the Lord by a person described as Belūri Mathapati.
304.	954	28th*	1363	"	A donation for <i>chāmarakolupu</i> on Vaiśākha Sukla Tṛtiya.
305.	914	24th*	1370	"	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a person described as Kalinga dandapātupariksha.
306.	913	24th*	1370	"	Describes the varibus items offered.
				"	A donation for <i>chāmaraseva</i> by one Chandarāju of Jantarunādu.
307.	744	6th*	1375	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
308.	1050	40th*	1375	"	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> . Refers to the performance of dance in the presence of the Lord.
309.	1104	46th*	1377	"	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by a person hailing from Vāranāśi Katakā.
310.	777	11th**	1383	"	A donation for the <i>chāmaraseva</i> and a gift of <i>chāmara</i> .

311.	805	12th*	1394	„	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by a person described as Kalinga dandapāṭupariksha.
312.	1061	41st*	1396	„	A donation registering a gift of land to the temple on Śrāvana Purnami.
313.	926	**	1456	„	Registers that one Ulluṣeṭṭi did some repairs to the temple.
314.	699	3rd**	1456	„	Records the installation of an image of Hanumanta on the precincts of the temple, also registers a donation for his <i>bhoga</i> . Refers to the priests as <i>nambyars</i> .
315.	1210	†	1501	„	Registers a gift of doors to the temple.
316.	1171	††	1519	„	Records the fact that one Yājñavalkya constructed a <i>satra</i> .
317.	1192	† ‡	1720	„	Registers a gift of <i>suvarnasathagopam</i> to the temple.

## Undated Records

1.	701	*	—	Oriya	Incomplete. Mentions Narasinga.
2.	702	*	—	„	Incomplete. Mentions Narasinga.
3.	729	6th*	—	Telugu	A donation for a <i>bhoga</i> by <i>sānisāmpradāya</i> .
4.	826	15th*	—	„	A donation for the umbrella service to the Lord.
5.	831	15th*	—	„	Mutilated. A donation for a <i>tirumāla</i> .

\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.† At the entrance of *bhogamandapa*.†† On a pillar in the *mukhamandapa*.‡ On a pillar near *asthanamandapa*.



	1	2	3	4	5
6.	854	17th*	—	Telugu	A donation for the conduct of several services in the temple.
7.	909	23rd**	—	Oriya	Damaged. Seems to record a <i>bhoga</i> to the Lord
8.	920	24th*	—	"	A donation for the umbrella service ( <i>alavattamu</i> ). Mentions also endowments for Tripurāntaka Devara.
9.	990	33rd*	—	"	Mutilated.
10.	1018	37th*	—	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
11.	1026	37th*	—	"	Mutilated. Seems to record a donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> and other gifts.
12.	1029	38th**	—	"	A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
13.	1051	40th*	—	"	Mutilated. Seems to record a donation for temple services.
14.	1099	44th*	—	"	A donation for conducting services in the temple.
15.	1145	**	—	"	Incomplete.
16.	1147	††	—	"	Incomplete. Mentions Virāśri Gajapati Gaudesvara.
17.	1154	††	—	"	Similar to the above record.
18.	1156	††	—	"	Records a donation for <i>bhoga</i> by a person. Mentions the officer Kalinga Dandapādu-pariksha, and the Bhogapariksha of the temple.
19.	1161	††	—	"	Registers a similar type of donation.
20.	1165	††	—	"	Registers a gift of 100 <i>mādas</i> to the temple.
21.	1185	††	—	"	Mutilated and incomplete.

22.	1202	††	—	”	Mutilated. Seems to record a declaration of unity of Sānisāmpradāya living on the precincts of the temple.
23.	1205	††	—	”	Mutilated. A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> by Ananta Peggada.
24.	1206	††	—	”	Mutilated. A donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
25.	1211	††¶	—	”	Donation for an <i>akhandadipa</i> .
26.	1212	§	—	”	Records the erection of a gateway in the temple.

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\* Niche in the *tiruchuttumala*.

\*\* Pillar in the *tiruchuttumala*.

†† In the *asthanamandapa*.

¶ On a pillar in *Kalyanamandapa*.

¶¶ On the wooden doors to the entrance of *bhogamandapa*.

§ On a pillar in the main portico.

# Glossary

Abhaya mudra	A hand pose to convey assurance, literally 'no fear' posture. The pose consists in holding the hand up with the palm showing up.
Acharya	A Teacher
Adhikari	Superintendent.
Adhyaya	Chapter of the book.
Adhyayana	Learning, study especially of the Vedas.
Adhyapaka	A Teacher.
Agama	Any sacred literature. Generally applied to the ritualistic texts belonging to Siva and Vishnu.
Akasavani	A heavenly voice.
Akhandadipa	A perpetual lamp.
Akshatas	Rice mixed with turmeric. This is used as an article of worship in every religious function.
Alvar	A Vaishnava saint.
Amin	A Revenue official.
Angaranga bhoga	Services performed to the Lord for his physical (Anga) and emotional (Ranga) satisfaction.
Anjalimudra	Hands folded in reverence.
Anga	A limb, any part of a temple.
Ankachakra	A calendar reckoning in the region of Orissa.
Ankusa	A goad.
Archana, Aradhana	Religious service.
Archaka	A priest.
Asana	A seat.
Asthanamandapa	Assembly-hall; a large enclosed hall in front of the main shrine used for celebrating the festivals of the Lord.

Avakasam	A Favourable occasion.
Avarana	An enclosure.
Avatara	Incarnation.
Baliharana	A food offering designed to pacify the minor deities.
Bhagavatari	A traditional singer of devotional music.
Bhakta	A devotee.
Bhakti	Devotion.
Bhandara, Sribhandara	Treasury.
Bhandaradhikari	An officer-in-charge of the treasury.
Bhoga	Food offering given to the deity.
Chakra	The discus of Vishnu; one of His four emblems.
Chamara; Vinjamara	A fly whisk.
Chamara seva	A religious service in which the deity is worship with fly whisk.
Chauri	
Cheti	A female servant.
Chinnalu	A unit of measurement equivalent to a grain.
Circar	A district.
Cowle	A lease.
Darsan	Audience.
Dasi	A servant-maid.
Devasthanam	A temple; literally, the place of a temple.
Dewl, Deul	A temple; a word used in Bengal and Orissa.
Dhrivabera	Permanently fixed.
Dhupa	Incense.
Dhyanasloka	Verse or verses in praise of the deity suitable for meditation.
Dhyanamantra	
Digvijaya	Conquest of the world.
Dikpala, Dikpalakas	The guardian angels at the four cardinal and four intermediate points of the compass.
Divitisalam	A salute with torches.

Dravida Prabandha	The compendium of the sacred hymns compose by the Tamil saints.
Dhwajasthambha	Flag staff in the temple.
Dwarapala Dwarapalaka	} A door-keeper
Ekadasi	The Eleventh day after the full-moon, or new-moon day.
Firman	A royal decree.
Foujdar	A military officer.
Gada	A club; one of the four emblems of Lord Vishnu.
Gadya	A coin used in medieval times.
Gaja-Vyala	A rampant lion on a couchan elephant.
Gana	A demi-God.
Garbhagriha	The inner sanctum.
Garbhamuda	The ceiling of the inner sanctum.
Garuda	A divine eagle, the vehicle of Lord Vishnu.
Gosala	The cow shed.
Hara	A necklace
Havalдар	A military officer under Islamic administration
Homa	Any oblation or sacrifice.
Hundi	A receptacle placed at the entrance of or on the precincts of the temple for depositing the gifts of the devotees.
Inam	Free gift of land.
Itihasa	Legendry or traditional history.
Jali	A prepared window.
Jayasthamba	A pillar of victory.
Kaifiyat	A short descriptive account of a tract or a place.
Kalasa, Kumbha	A water jar.



Kalyanamandapa	A marriage-hall.
Kapota	A cornice.
Katyavalambita	A hand pose where the arm is lowered to rest on the loin.
Kattadi	A share in the consecrated food.
Kavya	A poetical work.
Kirthimukha	Grotesque mask ; a decorative motif showing the grining face of a lion.
Kolupu	A service in the temple (literary worship).
Komati	A member of the trading community of Andhra.
Kostha Karanam	An accountant.
Kotwal	A police officer (Mughal administrative term applied to the head of a menial staff).
Kshetra	A holy place.
Kuncha	A measure.
Kundala	An ear ring.
Linga	A cylendrical stone ; an iconographic form of Lord Siva.
Mada	A coin of the medieval times.
Mahapatra	A district officer of the administrative system of the Gajapatis of Orissa.
Majumdar	An officer (Islamic designation).
Makara torana	A gate-way with a large mask on the cross bar connected to the Makaras or crocodile ; by foilaite designs.
Makuta	A crown ; a cap.
Mala (pushpamala)	} A garland.
Malika	
Mandala	A mystical diagram used to invoke a deity.
Mandapa	A porch.
Mangalasasana	Benediction.
Mantra	A hymn, a formula for prayer or meditation.

Matha	A monastery.
Mithuna	A couple.
Mukhamandapa	The pillared hall in front of a shrine, the frontal porch.
Mulavirat	The permanently consecrated image of a temple.
Murti	An image.
Musadhi	A clerk.
Naga	A Serpent, A Cobra, A mythical creature, half serpent and half human. The female counterpart is known as Nagi or Nagini.
Naganaginibandha Naganaginimithuna	} A motif showing a naga and a nagi entwined with each other.
Naivedya	
Natyamandapa	A food offering made to a deity.
Natyacharya	A dancing hall or a festival hall ; a theatre.
Nibandhakandru Nibandhakam	} Instructor in the art of dancing.
Nibandhana	
Nijaswarupa Nijarupa	} Functionaries.
Padasara	A share in the consecrated food.
Padma	The real form.
Padmapitha	An anklet.
Padmasana	Lotus.
Parayanadar	A lotus pedastal.
Paricharika	A sitting pose with crossed legs ; the left hand rests on the thigh and the other is held up.
Parikshaghar	A reader of the Purana. A corruption of the Sanskrit word 'Parayanakah'.
Parinirvana	An attendant.
Parvadina	The religious head of the temple.
Parsva	The great decease.
Pashkush	An auspicious day.
	Side of lamp.
	Tribute.

Peshkar	Administrative Officer who collects revenue.
Peetha	A pedestal.
Prabandha	Any literary work or composition, especially a poetical work.
Pradhani	A Minister.
Pradakshina	Circumambulation.
Prasada	Food offered to the images or remnants of such an offer.
Prasasthi	A pynegric formula or description found in inscriptions of ancient and medieval period.
Prakara	An enclosure.
Prathishta	Installation.
Prapatti	Self-surrender to the Lord.
Puja	Worship.
Purana	A mythological story.
Pushpa	A flower.
Pushpabandha	A moulding consisting of a lotus flower.
Putti	An indigenous measure.
Puttukoppulu	Tonsuring ceremony.
Rajabhoga	The food offered to the Lord at noon.
Rajya	A Kingdom.
Ratha	A Chariot.
Saka	A calendar reckoning starting from 78 A. D.
Sangharama	A Buddhist monastery.
Sani } Devadasi }	A dancing girl attached to a temple.
Sannayi	A wind pipe commonly played to the accompaniment of a drum in Hindu marriages.
Sannayimelam	Refers to a party of players on Sannayi.
Sannidhi	A shrine.
Sataka	A collection of a one hundred stanzas.

Setti	A trader.
Sheristadar	A treasury official.
Silpi	An artisan.
Silpisastra	Hindu texts on art, architecture and iconography.
Sistachara	Practices of the elite.
Sribali	A food offering.
Srikananam	An Accountant.
Sthalamahatmyam	A traditional account of any temple; usually found in Sanskrit, sometimes preserved only in manuscript form.
Stanapathi	A Superintendent.
Stapathi	A master craftsman or builder.
Stava }	A pynegric.
Stotra }	
Subedar	A provincial officer in the Mughal administration.
Suchimudra	A hand pose showing the hand fisted with the index finger raised or pointing out.
Sukhasana	A sitting posture with one leg hanging down and the other bent crosswise.
Suprabhatam	Devotional songs sung to awaken the Deity in the morning.
Taluqu	A revenue-administrative division consisting a number of villages.
Tanka	A coin of the medieval times.
Tirthavari	A bathing ghat of the temple.
Tirtha	A Ford.
Tiruchuttumala	A cloister of the temple.
Tirumajjana }	The holy bath given to the image of the deity.
Tirumanjana }	
Tirunallu	Festivals.
Tiruvudhi	A function at the temple which involves taking the image of a deity in procession with due ceremony.

Tirusannidhi	A sacred shrine.
Tiruvaradhana	The sacred ritual.
Totapariskha	An Inspector of the Gardens.
Tolas	An indigenous unit of measurement.
Torana	An arch.
Tribhangi	A dancing posture.
Trisula	A Tridant.
Tulasi	The holy basil held in veneration by the Hindu, particularly by the worshippers of "Vishnu".
Upachara	A religious service to Gods.
Utkutikasana	A sitting posture in which one sits with heels kept close to the bottom.
Utsava	A festival.
Vahana	A vehicle.
Vahanasala	A room specially earmarked in the temple for keeping the vehicles of the Lord.
Vibhuti	The Sacred Ash, particularly dear to God Siva.
Vidyadharas	A class of demi-Gods.
Vigraha	An image.
Vimana	A towered sanctuary containing the cell in which the diety is enshrined; literally, that which is without measurement.
Vrata	A vow.
Vyakhyana Mudra	A hand-pose signifying exposition.
Varda Mudra	Hand-pose indicating charity.
Vritti	A share in the consecrated food; same as Nibandhana.
Yogamudra	Hand-pose signifying meditation.
Yogapatta	A cloth-band generally worn as a support in a sitting posture.
Yajnopavita	Sacred thread accross the shoulder.
Yuga	Period of time according to Hindu tradition.
Zamindar	A Land owner.



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